

Language Attitudes in Old and New Gaeltacht Communities

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Abstract

This study aims to provide a description and analysis of Irish language use and attitudes towards it in three geographically and ideologically distinctive communities in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, by examining four separate, but related, issues:

- (i) Attitudes towards Irish in three contrasting Gaeltacht regions (an urban, ‘revival’ area in Northern Ireland and two rural, ‘survival’ *Gaeltachtaí* in the Republic of Ireland);
- (ii) The level of Irish-English bilingualism in these regions amongst cohorts of males and females of various ages and from divergent socio-economic backgrounds;
- (iii) The influence which positive or negative attitudes towards Irish exert on language choice;
- (iv) Whether psycho-perceptual factors like attitudes are as salient to the process of declining Irish-English bilingualism as socio-economic ones such as social class or personal network ties.

Data relating to language use and attitudes were collected in the three study areas by using different methodologies, including the administration of a questionnaire (in two versions: English and Irish) as well as semi-structured interviews.

The data collected thus were analysed and compared in order to determine the extent to which different attitudes towards the Irish language existed in these communities that are also distinctive in other ways. Another important objective was to try and identify the factors that influence and shape such differences. In this regard, particular attention was paid to: (i) state intervention (in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland) with respect to particular types of support for Irish as well as successful and unsuccessful language policies operating within these two states; (ii) language use in the community and home domains and (iii) Irish in the media.

The data gathered by questionnaire was analysed by performing factor and multivariate analysis of variance and the interview data was also interrogated. Both types of analyses were performed with the aim of assessing and explaining different attitudes towards the maintenance and the future of the Irish language in the three study areas as well as usage differences with respect to independent the variables of age, gender, and educational level. The analysis of the questionnaire data revealed which socio-demographic variables have an influence on the attitudinal dimensions taken into consideration and Irish language use in the three study areas where this study took place.

The interviews carried out in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland were instrumental in probing further the issues tackled by the questionnaire. They also functioned to explore additional aspects of language orientation, namely, whether informants held positive or negative attitudes towards different accents and dialects of Irish across the island of Ireland (particularly the newer revival varieties about which there has been much media attention but less scholarly investigation).

Declaration

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original and my own work. The material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

RACHELE ANTONINI

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	xii
Acknowledgements.....	xiii
Chapter 1: Background to the study	
1.1 Introduction to the study.....	1
1.2 Dissertation outline.....	3
1.3 Historical background.....	5
1.3.1. The history of the Irish language before 1922.....	5
1.3.2 The beginning of the decline.....	6
1.3.3 The revival effort and Government language policies in Éire.....	15
1.4 Irish-speaking areas.....	19
1.4.1 In Éire.....	19
1.4.2 In Northern Ireland.....	24
1.5 Irish language policies in the United Kingdom.....	30
1.5.1 Recent developments of the Irish language revival in Northern Ireland.	31
1.6 Irish in the European context.....	33
1.7 Irish today.....	35
1.8 The Vitality of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland.....	36
1.8.1 The influence of demographic factors.....	36
1.8.2 The influence of institutional support and control factors.....	38
1.8.3 Irish in the Media.....	41
1.9 The vitality of the Irish language in Northern Ireland.....	42
1.9.1 The demographic situation.....	43
1.9.2 Institutional support and control factors.....	44
1.9.3 Irish in institutional settings and in education.....	45
1.9.4 Irish in the broadcast media.....	45
1.9.5 Irish in the printed media and the web in the North and the South.....	46
1.10 The urban phenomenon.....	47

1.11	Conclusion.....	48
-------------	------------------------	-----------

Chapter Two. Language attitudes, revitalization and shift

2.1	Introduction.....	51
2.2	Attitudes.....	51
2.2.1	Nature and definition(s) of attitude.....	51
2.2.2	Attitude components.....	53
2.2.3	Related concepts.....	55
2.2.4	The formation and function of attitudes.....	61
2.3	Language attitudes.....	62
2.4	Language shift and death.....	65
2.4.1	Language shift and domain analysis.....	68
2.4.2	Two case studies of language shift and death.....	71
2.5	Language revitalization.....	74
2.6	Irish language attitudes studies.....	77
2.7	Conclusion.....	80

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1	Introduction.....	82
3.2	The research instruments.....	83
3.2.1	The questionnaire.....	83
3.3	The pilot study.....	86
3.3.1	Questionnaire Design.....	87
3.3.2	Typology of questions.....	90
3.3.3	The wording of questions.....	94
3.3.4	Independent and dependent variables.....	95
3.3.5	Irish as experienced in school.....	96
3.3.6	Less Irish.....	97
3.3.7	More Irish.....	97
3.3.8	General attitudes towards the Irish language.....	98
3.3.9	Attitudes towards Government language policies.....	98
3.3.10	Irish in the media.....	99
3.3.11	Relatives.....	100
3.3.12	Domains of Language Use.....	100
3.3.13	The work place.....	102

3.3.14	The public domain	103
3.3.15	The Church.....	103
3.3.16	Informal Interaction.....	104
3.4	Elicitation of data in SC.....	106
3.4.1	Choosing the sample.....	106
3.4.2	The pre-test.....	108
3.5	Design of the main study.....	108
3.5.1	The Donegal Gaeltacht.....	108
3.5.2	Sample selection in DON.....	111
3.5.3	Elicitation of data.....	111
3.5.4	The Shaw's Road Community (Pobal Feirste) in Belfast, Northern Ireland.....	113
3.5.5	Modified version of the questionnaire.....	113
3.5.6	Elicitation of data in the Shaw's Road Community.....	114
3.6	The interviews.....	114
3.6.1	Interview design and typology of questions.....	116
3.6.2	The informants.....	117
3.6.3	Researcher's biography and positionality.....	118
3.7	Data Analysis.....	121
3.7.1.	Questionnaire data.....	121
3.7.2	Data analysis methodology.....	122
3.8	Fieldwork politics.....	124
3.8.1	Ethical concerns.....	125
3.9	Conclusion.....	126
 Chapter 4: Analysis of questionnaire data		
4.1	Introduction.....	129
4.2	Sample description.....	130
4.3	Irish as experienced in school.....	133
4.3.1	Less Irish.....	135
4.3.2	More Irish.....	138
4.5	General attitudinal statements on the Irish language.....	142
4.5.1	Factor analysis of the IRSITOP scale.....	143
4.5.2	The influence of socio-demographic variables on general attitude.....	146
	subscales	

4.6	Attitudes towards Government language policies.....	149
4.6.1	Factor analysis of the GOVPOL scale.....	153
4.6.2	The impact of socio-demographic variables on ‘Expectations and feelings’, ‘Promotion and involvement’, and ‘Expectations’	156
4.7	Irish language use.....	159
4.7.1.	Language use in the community.....	160
4.7.2.	The home domain.....	167
4.7.3	Attitudes towards the transmission of Irish to children.....	170
4.8	Data adequacy of Irish language use scales.....	171
4.8.1	Factor analysis of DOMPEOPLE.....	172
4.8.2	<i>Impact of socio-demographic factors on ‘Formal’ and ‘Informal’</i>	<i>174</i>
4.8.3	Factor analysis of DOMPLACE.....	176
4.8.4	Impact of socio-demographic factors on ‘Formal settings’ and ‘Informal settings’	177
4.8.5	Factor analysis of GENUSE.....	179
4.8.6	Effect of the socio-demographic variables on GENUSE.....	180
4.8.7	Factor analysis and MANOVA of the home domain scales.....	182
4.8.8	The influence of socio-demographic variables on NOWHOME.....	186
4.9	Irish in the media.....	189
4.9.1	Attitudes towards Irish in the media.....	193
4.10	Relatives.....	194
4.11	Conclusion.....	196

Chapter 5. Analysis of interview data

5.1.	Introduction.....	198
5.2	The informants.....	198
5.3	Personal experience with Irish in education.....	198
5.4	The current situation and the future of the Irish language.....	204
5.5	Governmental support for the Irish language.....	208
5.6	Difference between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.....	213
5.7	Use of Irish in the community.....	215
5.8	Use of Irish with people from other Gaeltacht areas.....	217
5.9	Use of Irish in the home.....	219
5.10	Irish media.....	222
5.11	Conclusion.....	226

Chapter 6. Summary and discussion

6.1	Introduction.....	227
6.2	Methodology.....	227
6.2.1	Study design and samples.....	227
6.2.2	The instruments.....	228
6.3	Language attitudes: Discussion of overall results.....	229
6.3.1	Attitudes towards education.....	231
6.3.2	General attitudes towards Irish.....	234
6.3.3	Attitudes towards Irish language policies.....	237
6.3.4	Attitudes towards speakers of other varieties of Irish.....	240
6.4	Domains of Irish language use in the three study areas.....	242
6.4.1	Irish language use in the community.....	242
6.4.2	Irish language use in the home.....	246
6.4.3	Irish language media.....	249
6.5.	Conclusion.....	250

Chapter 7. Conclusion

7.1	Introduction.....	251
7.2	Limitations of the present study.....	251
7.3	Major findings and implications for future research	253
7.3.1	Attitudes towards the Irish language.....	253
7.3.2	Irish language use.....	254

Bibliography.....	257
--------------------------	------------

Websites.....	273
----------------------	------------

Appendix A. Letter of endorsement by <i>Údarás na Gaeltachta</i>.....	276
--	------------

Appendix B. Questionnaire in English.....	277
--	------------

Appendix C. Questionnaire in Irish.....	286
--	------------

Appendix D. Electoral divisions by category.....	296
---	------------

Appendix E. Interview protocol.....	302
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Appendix F. Excel Spreadsheet.....	303
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Appendix G. Glossary.....	304
----------------------------------	------------

Appendix H. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	306
--	------------

Appendix I. Profile of interviewees at the time of the interview.....	307
--	------------

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Irish language decline in Northern Ireland 1851-1891.....	25
Table 1.2: Irish language speaking in Northern Ireland for District Council Areas.....	29
Table 1.3: Irish-medium school distribution in Northern Ireland.....	32
Table 2.1: Fishman's Scale for Threatened Languages.....	75
Table 4.1: Level of satisfaction with the amount of Irish studied at school.....	134
Table 4.2: Irish seen as an obstacle to proficiency in other subjects (percentages).....	135
Table 4.3: The usefulness of Irish in finding a job (percentages).....	136
Table 4.4: Attitudes and feelings towards studying Irish (percentages).....	138
Table 4.5: Usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job (percentages).....	139
Table 4.6: Irish as a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity (percentages).....	141
Table 4.7: Level of (dis)like to Irish while in school.....	141
Table 4.8: Frequencies for IRSITOP.....	142
Table 4.9: KMO and Bartlett's Test for DON and SC.....	144
Table 4.10: Factors extracted for IRSITOP.....	145
Table 4.11: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for 'Irishness' and 'Negative outlook'	147
Table 4.12: Percentages for GOVLOP.....	150
Table 4.13: GOVLOP - KMO and Bartlett's Test for DON and SC.....	153
Table 4.14: .Summary of factor analysis for SC.....	153
Table 4.15: Summary of factor analysis for DON.....	155
Table 4.16: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for ' <i>Expectations and feelings</i> '	157
Table 4.17: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for ' <i>Expectations and feelings</i> '	158
Table 4.18: Frequencies for DOMPLACE.....	163
Table 4.19: Frequencies for GENUSE.....	165
Table 4.20: Frequencies for USEDHOME.....	167
Table 4.21: Frequencies for NOWHOME.....	169
Table 4.22: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for Irish language use scales.....	172
Table 4.23: Factor analysis of DOMPEOPLE.....	173
Table 4.24: Gender distribution of respondents for 'Formal' and 'Informal'	174
Table 4.25: Factor analysis of DOMPLACE.....	176
Table 4.26: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic	

variables for ‘Formal settings’ and ‘Informal settings’	177
Table 4.27: Factor analysis of GENUSE.....	180
Table 4.28: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for GENUSE.....	180
Table 4.29: Factor analysis of USEDHOME.....	183
Table 4.30: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for USEDHOME.....	183
Table 4.31: Levene’s test for USEDHOME _{SC}	184
Table 4.32: Factor analysis of NOWHOME.....	186
Table 4.33: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for NOWHOME.....	187
Table 4.34: Reasons for watching/listening to radio and TV programmes in Irish.....	191
Table 4.35: Reasons given by the three samples for watching/listening to radio and TV programmes in Irish.....	191
Table 4.36: Reasons for reading magazines and books in Irish.....	192
Table 4.37: Reasons given by the three samples for reading in Irish.....	193
Table 4.38: Language used in communicating with emigrated relatives.....	196
Table 6.1: Influence of socio-demographic variables on general attitudes (MANOVA).....	236
Table 6.2: Agreement and disagreement with GOVLOP.....	238
Table 6.3: Influence of socio-demographic variables on attitudes (ANOVA).....	240
Table 6.4: Summary of levels of Irish use in the community.....	243
Table 6.5: Influence of socio-demographic variables on community language use ((M)ANOVA).....	245
Table 6.6: Summary of levels of Irish use in the home domain.....	247
Table 6.7: Influence of socio-demographic variables on language use in the home (MANOVA).....	248

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: 16 th century Irish-speaking areas	8
Figure 1.2: Counties of Ireland subjected to plantations.....	9
Figure 1.3: Irish language situation/erosion in the 19 th century.....	13
Figure 1.4: The Gaeltacht in 1926.....	21
Figure 1.5: The Gaeltacht 2003/2004 according to the three reclassified categories.....	24
Figure 1.6: Early 20 th century Irish-speaking Ulster.....	26
Figure 1.7: Irish-medium schools outside the Gaeltacht 2009/2010.....	32
Figure 1.8: The Growth of Irish Medium Schools in the 32 Counties outside the Gaeltacht: 1972-2010.....	40
Figure 2.1: Three-component model.....	54
Figure 2.2: The ‘Tree Model’ of attitude levels.....	56
Figure 2.3: Recognizable features of the three components and data elicitation in the present study.....	64
Figure 3.1: Likert scale used for attitudinal items.....	91
Figure 3.2: Scales used to measure Irish language use.....	92
Figure 3.3: Study areas.....	128
Figure 4.1: The age variable for the three samples.....	131
Figure 4.2: Levels of education for the three samples.....	132
Figure 4.3: The occupation variable for the three samples.....	133
Figure 4.4: Amount of Irish studied at primary and post-primary level.....	134
Figure 4.5: Index on Irish seen as an obstacle to proficiency in other subject.....	136
Figure 4.6: Index on the usefulness of Irish in finding a job.....	137
Figure 4.7: Index of the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job.....	140
Figure 4.8: Index of the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job according to the PF sample.....	140
Figure 4.9: Language use with different categories of people in the South Connemara Gaeltacht.....	161
Figure 4.10: Language use with different categories of people in the Donegal Gaeltacht.....	161
Figure 4.11: Language use with different categories of people in PF.....	163
Figure 4.12: Attitudinal statements on the transmission of the Irish language to children.....	171
Figure 6.1: Ability to speak Irish by age group and sex.....	235

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Chapter 1: Background to the study

1.1 Introduction to the study

The fortune of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland has been determined by a variety of differing historical, social, political and demographic features.

In the Republic of Ireland, for many years, the Irish language was considered to be low in status and was associated with poverty, backwardness and ignorance (O'Reilly, 2001: 78-79). However, with the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, its status was raised and the promotion of its revival and maintenance carried out through a series of policies and actions to foster the preservation of the language in the *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking district) and language revival in the rest of Ireland. The events which led to the present fragile *status quo* were determined in part by the utilitarian purposes which the acquisition of English had attained over the centuries, leading to a steady abandonment of Irish in favour of the dominant language (Wall, 1969; Ó Riagáin, 1988b; Hindley, 1990; Ó Huallacháin, 1991).

The division of the country into 32 counties in the south and 6 in the north, may not only have accelerated the decline of the number of Irish speakers, but also the cultural and ethnic association of the language with the nationalist movement (Malcom, 2009).

After decades of neglect, bordering on opposition, on behalf of the British government, thanks to the dedicated efforts of second language learners in the 1960s, the revival of the Irish language has gained momentum (Maguire, 1991; Corrigan, 2010).

My personal interest in the Irish language stems from my family history¹ as well as from the many holidays I spent in Gaeltacht areas with my family during which I was able to observe and hear the Irish language being used in the community in a variety of contexts and situations (e.g., in shops, pubs, schools, social events, and so on). Furthermore, my personal observations in the Gaeltacht convinced me of the existence of strong attitudes in support of the Irish language which seemed, more importantly, to correspond to the use of Irish both at community and family level.

¹ I am half Italian and half Irish on my mother's side. My Irish grandfather, was part of the language movement and translated governmental documents into Irish.

The present doctoral research sets out to examine four separate, but related, issues:

- (i) identifying attitudes towards Irish in three contrasting Gaeltacht regions (an urban, 'revival' area in Northern Ireland and two rural, 'survival' *Gaeltachtaí* in the Republic);
- (ii) ascertaining the level of Irish-English bilingualism in these regions amongst cohorts of males and females of various ages and from divergent socio-economic backgrounds;
- (iii) calculating the influence which positive/negative attitudes towards Irish exert on language choice;
- (iv) investigating whether psycho-perceptual factors like attitudes are as salient to the process of declining Irish-English bilingualism as socio-economic factors such as social class/network.

Data relating to language use and attitudes in these geographically and politically distinctive communities were collected using questionnaire methods similar to those employed in other comprehensive surveys in the Republic of Ireland (e.g., Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research -CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin, 1992) and in other Celtic countries (Dorian, 1981; MacKinnon, 1977). Over the past decade, an increasing number of studies and surveys on Irish language attitudes and use have been carried out and published. The most relevant to the present study, and whose data have been analysed and used for comparison with the data I collected in 2000-2003, are Hindley (1990), Ó Riagáin (1992), Ó Giollagáin *et al.* (2007), and Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009).

In order to reach a characteristically dispersed population, in 2000, the questionnaire was distributed through contacts in the local schools, parishes, and mass media outlets. 148 respondents in the Donegal Gaeltacht (henceforth referred to as DON) and 15 members of the *Pobal Feirste* Gaeltacht (henceforth referred to as PF) in Belfast, completed the questionnaire.

My hypothesis, with regard to the Donegal respondents, is based on the results of my previous study of attitudes to the Irish language undertaken in the Connemara Gaeltacht (henceforth referred to as SC) in 1999 for my MA thesis (Antonini, 1999) which revealed a marked change in the status of Irish since the publication of the CILAR Report (1975). Moreover, while the latter predicted a sharp decline in the transmission of Irish in *Gaeltachtaí* by the end of the twentieth century, my investigation of SC revealed moderate to high use of Irish, continuing support for

language maintenance programmes and successful transmission in the home. Moreover, the cross-classification of responses with socio-economic factors, for example, demonstrated the importance of attending more closely than the CILAR project did to demographic and economic variables in the analysis.

A series of interviews were also subsequently conducted in the Republic of Ireland (in Galway and in the South Connemara Gaeltacht) and in Northern Ireland (in Derry) in 2003.

In the final phase of the project I compared the DON and SC findings with the responses from the PF study area, and I also compared the questionnaire data with the interview data. As expected, the findings confirmed the existence of strong attitudes in support of the Irish language and high levels of use within the family domain and in specific community domains. However, despite the differential status enjoyed by Irish in Northern Ireland, which, until recently, was subject to less accommodating language and educational policies and which, prior to the Good Friday Agreement, had no formal constitutional recognition, my expectations concerning the impact on both language use and attitudes towards Irish in Northern Ireland were not confirmed. On the contrary, as will be illustrated in detail in chapter 4, 5, and 6, the responses given by the PF sample often matched those given by the respondents from the other two samples.

1.2 Dissertation outline

Chapter One will present a brief introduction to the origin and diffusion of the Irish language as well as an historical outline of the decline of the Irish language over the centuries. This overview will focus on two major topics: the first one will deal with language shift before 1922, i.e. before Independence and the political division of the island into two political entities, the twenty six counties of what was later to become the Republic of Ireland, and the six counties comprising Northern Ireland. The second part of the historical introduction will present the further development of the use and decline of the Irish language after 1922, thus presenting a “separate” outline for the fortunes of the language in the Republic and in Northern Ireland by focussing on the different language policies implemented and the role played by different areas and agents in the decline and revival of the language both at the national and European level. The first chapter will then conclude with an outline of the current Irish language situation by describing its use and promotion in the media, education, politics, and legislation in both states.

Chapter Two will define the operational concepts and the theoretical background to the study. It will present and analyse sociolinguistic surveys and studies carried out in Ireland and in other countries where Celtic languages are also in danger of disappearing (or have already done so). Moreover, other research concerned with language attitudes and/or the methodology employed in language surveys will also be examined so as to situate the present research in context.

Chapter Three will provide a detailed description of the study design and the methodology employed. It will illustrate the stages in which the study was developed and the regions where it was carried out, as well as providing demographic details of the informants who participated in the project and the research instruments (questionnaires and the like) administered to them.

Chapter Four and Five will present the descriptive and quantitative analysis of the data gathered by means, respectively, of a questionnaire and interviews. All the data collected through the questionnaires were analysed by means of SPSS, a powerful software package that provides a wide range of basic and advanced data analysis capabilities. The dependent variables below will be cross-tabulated with age, sex, level of education, and occupation:

- (1) attitudes associated with Irish in education;
- (2) attitudes towards the future of the language;
- (3) attitudes towards the divergent language policies of the Governments in the North and South of Ireland;
- (4) Irish in the media;
- (5) Irish language use in the home, in the local community and in the wider communities of Northern Ireland/the Republic;
- (6) Irish as a symbol of ethnic or social identity;
- (7) The influence of inter-marriage and migration on the use of Irish.

Chapter Six will summarize and discuss the results on the basis of the results illustrated in Chapters Four and Five.

Chapter Seven will illustrate the conclusions and will highlight points of comparison with previous research on the Irish language and in other communities which have been subject to language shift both diachronically and synchronically.

1.3 Historical background

1.3.1. *The history of the Irish language before 1922*

Irish is a Celtic language and, as such, a member of the Indo-European family of languages. Within the Celtic family Irish represents the Goidelic branch of insular Celtic.²

Irish Gaelic “was introduced to Ireland probably in the second half of the first millennium B.C., and it totally superseded other languages” (Ó Huallacháin, 1991: 1) so that by the sixth century AD it was the main vernacular spoken on the island alongside Latin which had been introduced in the fifth century by Christian missionaries (Ó Huallacháin, 1991; Ó Breasláin and Dwyer, 1995).

Periods of greater linguistic diversity were introduced in Ireland by and during the Norse settlements (800 onwards) and the Anglo-Norman conquest and colonisation (1169 onwards), consequently “by the middle of the ninth century societal Norse-Irish bilingualism was well established, not just in the larger coastal towns, where the Norse were in control of trade, but all around the coast, even in small fishing communities” (Ó Murchú, 1988a: 244)³. However, Norse settlements in what is now Northern Ireland were not as extensive as in the rest of the island. This meant that on a more micro and local level their socio-political impact in Ulster was less significant than what is now the Republic of Ireland (Corrigan, 2010). On the linguistic front, as Ó Cuív (1951: 8) pointed out, the Anglo-Norman forces that invaded Ireland in the 12th century “composed as they were of bands of Flemings and Welshmen as well as Norman French” brought with them their own linguistic dynamics that may have had some impact on the linguistic situation obtaining in Ireland at the time. Indeed, as Mac Giolla Chríost (2002: 428) observes, “like many of their European peers, [the Anglo-Normans] were in all probability multilingual” and English was only one of the languages they used, together with French, Latin, and Irish⁴.

² Celtic languages are grouped into two main subgroups: Q Celtic and P Celtic, which emerged and developed from the Indo-European language (Jackson, 1969: 2), “thus the Celts in Britain were known as P Celts, and the Irish as Q Celts. Goidelic, therefore, was the forerunner of Modern Irish, Scots Gaelic and Manx, whilst Bretonic was the linguistic ancestor of Modern Welsh, Breton and Cornish” (Ó Breasláin and Dwyer, 1995: 1-2).

³ However, as Corrigan (2010) points out it is important to note that on a more localized and specific level regions were impacted differently and at different times.

⁴ Adams (1970) describes the post-Celtic linguistic situation in Ireland as characterised by the presence of a number of intrusive languages. The most influential were Latin, Welsh, Norse, French and English.

While the Normans had gained political control of two-thirds of the country by about 1250, for several centuries the English language offered no serious threat to Gaelic. In the towns of the east coast, e.g. Dublin, Waterford and Wexford (the Pale), English and Norman French were the languages normally spoken, while Irish remained the language spoken in rural areas. As a matter of fact, as Ó Murchú points out, while the Normans “introduced a largely English-speaking bourgeoisie [...] Irish continued to have a strong societal and regional base and, by the end of the fifteenth century [...] Irish was the dominant language among all classes in the countryside” (1988a: 245). The descendants of the Anglo-Normans were, thus, gradually assimilated into Irish society thus adopting the Irish language, the still dominant speech, as well as the native customs and laws. Kallen (1997) hypothesized the existence, in the 14th century, of two parallel diglossic social systems:

that of traditional Gaelic society with Latin and literary Irish at the H level and vernacular Irish in the L domains, the other was an imported system in which Latin and French occupied the H position, vernacular English the L level, and literary English had only started to make inroads into the H domains (10).

1.3.2 The beginning of the decline

Despite the fact that the Gaelic Order was thriving and had managed to absorb the impact and the influence of the Anglo-Norman intervention, in reality it had received the first real blow which would subsequently and inexorably weaken its position and strength. As a matter of fact:

In Ireland, though the Anglo-Norman impact was at first absorbed and a predominantly Irish-speaking Early Modern Ireland emerged, the Irish-speaking tradition was never again the language of a fully autonomous polity, either in Ireland or Scotland (Ó Murchú, 1988b: 80).

In 1366, in an attempt to reverse the rapid process of assimilation of the Anglo-Norman settlers into Gaelic culture and language, the Anglo-Irish Parliament decided to pass the Statutes of Kilkenny, which punished any colonist who lived and behaved according to Irish customs and which also forbade every English or Irishman living among the English from speaking the Irish language.⁵ This first attempt, however, was quite ineffectual, indeed “the initial administrative success of the Anglo-Normans was

⁵ “Also, it is ordained and established, that every Englishman do use the English language, and be named by an English name, leaving off entirely the manner of naming used by the Irish; and that every Englishman use the English custom, fashion, mode of riding and apparel, according to his estate” (Crowley, 2000: 15).

considerable, but the Statutes of Kilkenny (...) are a testament to the Gaelicization of many of the Anglo-Norman families beyond the Pale” (Hughes, 2001: 106).

This attempt was to be reconfirmed in 1495 and again in 1588 when new decrees were announced: “compelling the Irish and the English to live apart and punishing those people who followed the native customs or who sought alliance with the Irish” (Ó Fiaich, 1969: 102).

By the end of the fifteenth century, due to the depredations of the Irish and the Gaelicisation of the leading Norman families, the area of Norman rule in Ireland had shrunk to a few small enclaves and the English rulers had not yet managed to secure a strong foothold on the island. Indeed,

the Anglo-Normans who were the military leaders during the initial settlement had been completely absorbed by the Irish by the end of the 15th century. The progressive Gaelicisation led the English to attempt planting the Irish countryside in order to reinforce the English presence there [however] it was only with James I that successful planting of (Lowland Scottish and English) settlers in the north of the country tipped the linguistic balance in favour of English in the north (Hickey, 2009: 1-2).

As detailed in figure 1.1, despite the fact that by the early sixteenth century the population of Ireland was still almost universally Irish-speaking, the status and use of the language were soon to be destabilized in favour of the English language.

The fate of the Irish language was sealed by the political changes and the subsequent struggles that took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Ó Fiaich, 1969:103; Ó Riagáin, 1988c: 4; Ó Tuathaigh, 1990: 1; Wall, 1969: 82).

Moreover, it is also important to note that:

the English versus Irish struggle went on for a century after [the battle of] Kinsale but the wars of the seventeenth century became less and less a struggle for political and cultural supremacy between the native Irish stock and the foreigner, and more and more a struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism, between old proprietors and new planters, for the possession of the soil of Ireland (Wall, 1969: 82).

Tudor legislation and policies had an exacting impact on the Irish language and its strength and prestige as a spoken language. In 1537, Henry VIII passed an Act which forbade people in Ireland to use and speak Irish. Subsequent legislation further undermined the language by making English the language of law and administration and, above all, the language of opportunity (Wardhaugh, 1987: 91). Hence:

the Tudor political advance and the suppression of the Irish language now went hand in hand. Irish was cut off from its patrons, the chieftains of both Gaelic and Anglo-Irish descent, who were decimated in a series of wars and

confiscations. It was deprived of its poets and learned men, who were hunted and imprisoned (Ó Fiaich, 1969: 104).

Figure 1.1: 16th century Irish-speaking areas (from Ó Huallacháin, 1991)

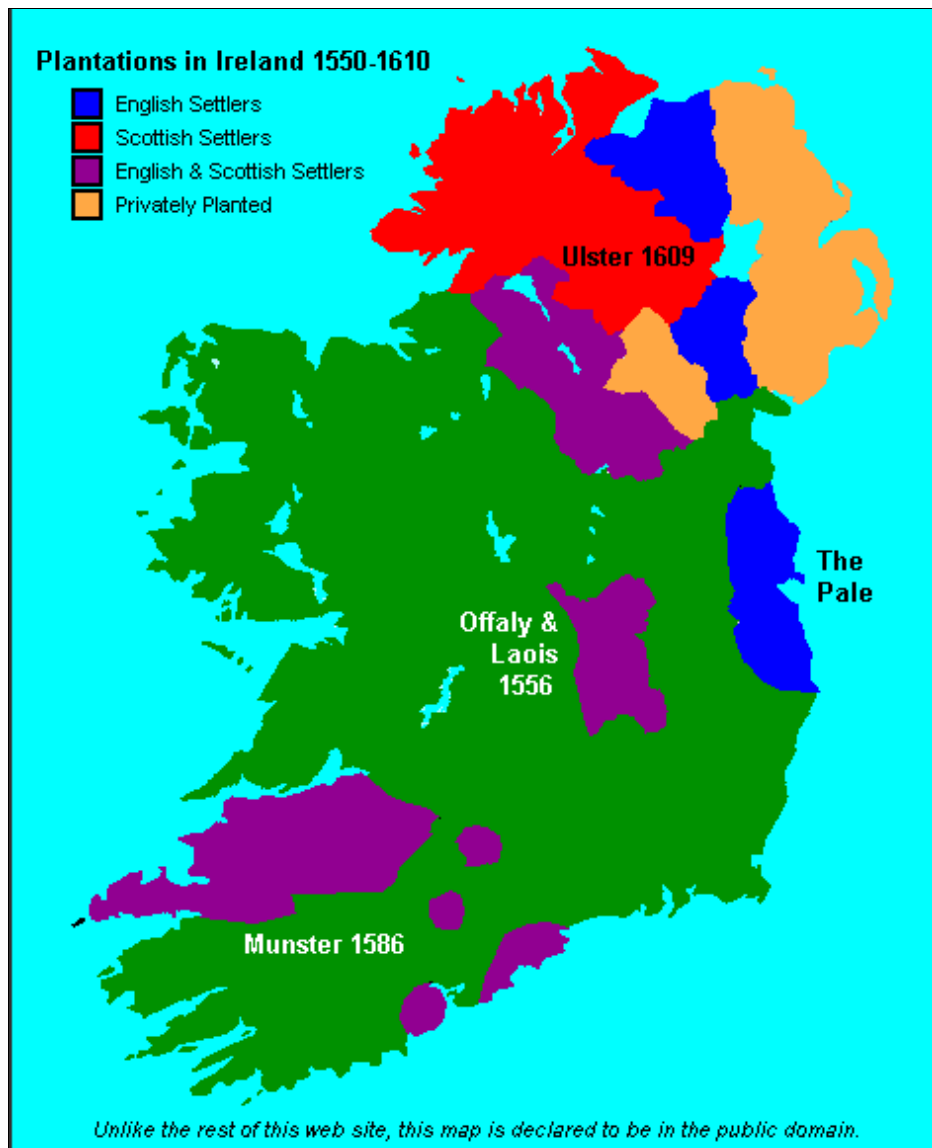


Indeed, a series of events, namely the Tudor and Stuart conquests and plantations (1534-1610), the Cromwellian settlement (1654), and the Williamite war (1689-91) followed by the enactment of the Penal Laws (1695), for the first time, had the cumulative effect of eliminating the old Catholic Irish-speaking ruling classes and the educated classes, thus inflicting a severe blow to the Irish language and the culture it embodied. All these events represent a watershed in the history of the Irish language and of its decline because, as Ó Murchú remarks, "the peripheralisation of the Irish-speaking community had begun and, for the first time the language began to slide towards disadvantaged status" (1988: 246). Indeed, not only did they undermine the

status of Irish as a major language, but their focus and impact was particularly intensive exactly in those areas where the Gaelic Order was particularly strong and rebellious in the north of the island.

The defeat suffered by the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell during the Nine Years' War (1594-1603) weakened the Gaelic leaders' hold and power on the land. The voluntary exile of the two Earls and ninety of their followers in 1607, left the people without a leadership and the province in the hands of the English. The subsequent Ulster Plantation (1609 onwards) displaced the old English and Gaelic Irish Catholic landowners with a new landowning class comprising English and Lowland Protestant Scots (Adams, 1967; Corrigan, 1999) (see figure 1.2 below).

Figure 1.2: Major plantation schemes and areas of English/British influence in Ireland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (from <http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/> last accessed 31 July 2012)



Following the Cromwellian settlement (1654), the Williamite war (1689-91) and the enactment of the Penal Laws (1695), the new landowning and urban middle class introduced from England and southern Scotland established a society in which English was normally used by the upper classes, the government and public institutions, while Irish continued to be used by the majority of the rural population and, for a time, by the servant classes in towns (McGuire, 1987)

by the end of a century that had begun with the battle of Kinsale, and ended with the Battle of the Boyne and the Treaty of Limerick, we see a shift of power from the Gaelic Order to Ascendancy Ireland and the establishment of English as the language of administration, politics, and commerce (Hughes, 2001: 106).

In the first half of the 18th century, societal Irish-English bilingualism grew rapidly and, as economic conditions deteriorated later in the century, the loss of community confidence began a shift towards English (Ó Murchú, 1988a: 246). As Kallen explains:

the social consequence of the subsequent attack on the native Irish political and social institutions which supported H level uses of Irish in law, religion, and literature is that, by the end of the 18th century, the parallel and independent systems of diglossia [...] had given way to a single system in which Irish came to occupy predominantly L domains, while English [...] had come to occupy both the domains of vernacular speech and H functions (1997: 15).

Irish thus began to be associated with poverty and social disadvantage. The shift to English had already “killed Irish at the top of the social scale and had already weakened its position among the entire population of the country” (Wall, 1969: 82).

The decade of the 1830s is generally cited as crucial on account of the introduction, in 1831, of State provision for national schools, which used only English for teaching. This move was instituted in order to regularize an educational system “which was based neither on the unregulated hedge-school system nor that offered by the Protestant proselytising societies” (Crowley, 2000: 134). Authors are divided on this issue. This event has always been blamed for the further stigmatization of the Irish language and the consequent abandonment of the language in favour of the more prestigious dominant language. While most scholars tend to agree with Pearse’s accusation that the National Schools were a ‘murder machine’ (Pearse, 1916) and ‘the graves of the national language’ (MacHale quoted in Crowley, 2000: 134) which dealt another severe blow to the prestige of the Irish language, there is also a school of thought which depicts this accusation as a myth supported by unreliable “demographic and socio-historical data” (Corrigan, 1999: 57).

The Great Famine (1845-1849), one of Ireland's major socio-economic catastrophes and one of the chief designated culprits in the drastic decline of Irish speakers in the nineteenth century, is one of the topics of "the often highly-charged debates surrounding Irish historical facts and fictions" (Póirtéir, 1995: 4) and of the more recent revisionist approaches to Irish history (e.g. Boyce and Ó Day, 1996).

In 1835 the number of Irish speakers was estimated at four million (Ó Murchú: 1988a). By 1851, this figure had dropped to 1.5 million speakers. However, the failure of a series of potato crops for four consecutive years (1845-1849) caused the death of a million people and the subsequent mass emigration of approximately 1.5 million people. These figures consisted almost entirely of "the Catholic rural poor, particularly in those areas where, for many, Irish was still the language of everyday life" (Crowley, 2000: 135). Nonetheless, as Crowley himself (2000) and an increasing number of scholars have observed (especially Fitzgerald's (1984, 2003) in-depth analyses, as well as Ó Murchú, 1988b; Corrigan, 1992, 2003), the Irish language was already undergoing a rapid and severe decline before the onset of the Famine. Moreover, migration was well under way (Corrigan, 1992; 1999; Daly, 1996) in the decades that preceded the Famine.

Unfortunately, it is very hard to assess the exact number of Irish speakers before the Famine as, in this respect, the interpretation of the data and figures gathered by the various censuses is quite problematic. Indeed, as Hughes observes, "[t]he subject is probably portrayed at its worst in the quagmire of statistical data that various surveys have produced for public consumption" (2001: 109-110).

A clear example of this 'quagmire of statistical data' is presented by Hindley's summary of the available data, which clearly shows the unreliability of the data on Irish-speaking collected by different sources from 1799 to 1851 (1990: 15). One important element that emerged from Hindley's and other scholars' critical analyses of available official statistical data (e.g. Ó Cuív, 1951; Ó Murchú, 1988b; Corrigan, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1984; 2003), is the unreliability of the data collected by the censuses from 1851 (the year when a question on language use was introduced in the Irish Census of population) to 1901:

As a general rule of thumb, one could state that the statistics for the period between 1851 and the formation of the Gaelic League (1893) are, if anything, probably an underestimation, whereas the statistics for the Twenty-Six Counties in after period are frequently an overestimation (Hughes, 2001: 109-110).

Moreover, as Corrigan (1992: 148) notes "the records relating to the state of the Irish language during the crucial period circa 1750 to 1850 are provided by barony [a large

sub-county area] rather than nation-wide and are estimated rather than actual figures”, while data based on smaller geographical units such as Dispensary Districts (DDs) or Districts of Electoral Division (DEDs) would have provided a more detailed estimation of the distribution of Irish speakers.

Fitzgerald based his 1984 and 2003 studies on the former and the latter area divisions. Despite the difficulty in comparing his results due to the different size of such geographical units, both his study on estimates by barony projecting back from the 1851 Census (1984) and his study which projected back from the data on 60-plus Irish speakers recorded in the 1911 Census (2003), highlighted an important phenomenon, i.e. that Irish language use was already in strong decline in the pre-Famine decades and that the pattern of such linguistic erosion was already leading to the present fragmented configuration of Gaeltacht areas (see figure 1.3 below).

Despite the academic interest in the Irish language and the concern for the welfare of the spoken language, the decline of which was becoming increasingly evident at the end of the eighteenth century, it was not possible to offset the social effects caused by the Great Famine. The Irish-speaking districts suffered a major blow in terms of victims and subsequent emigration, thus:

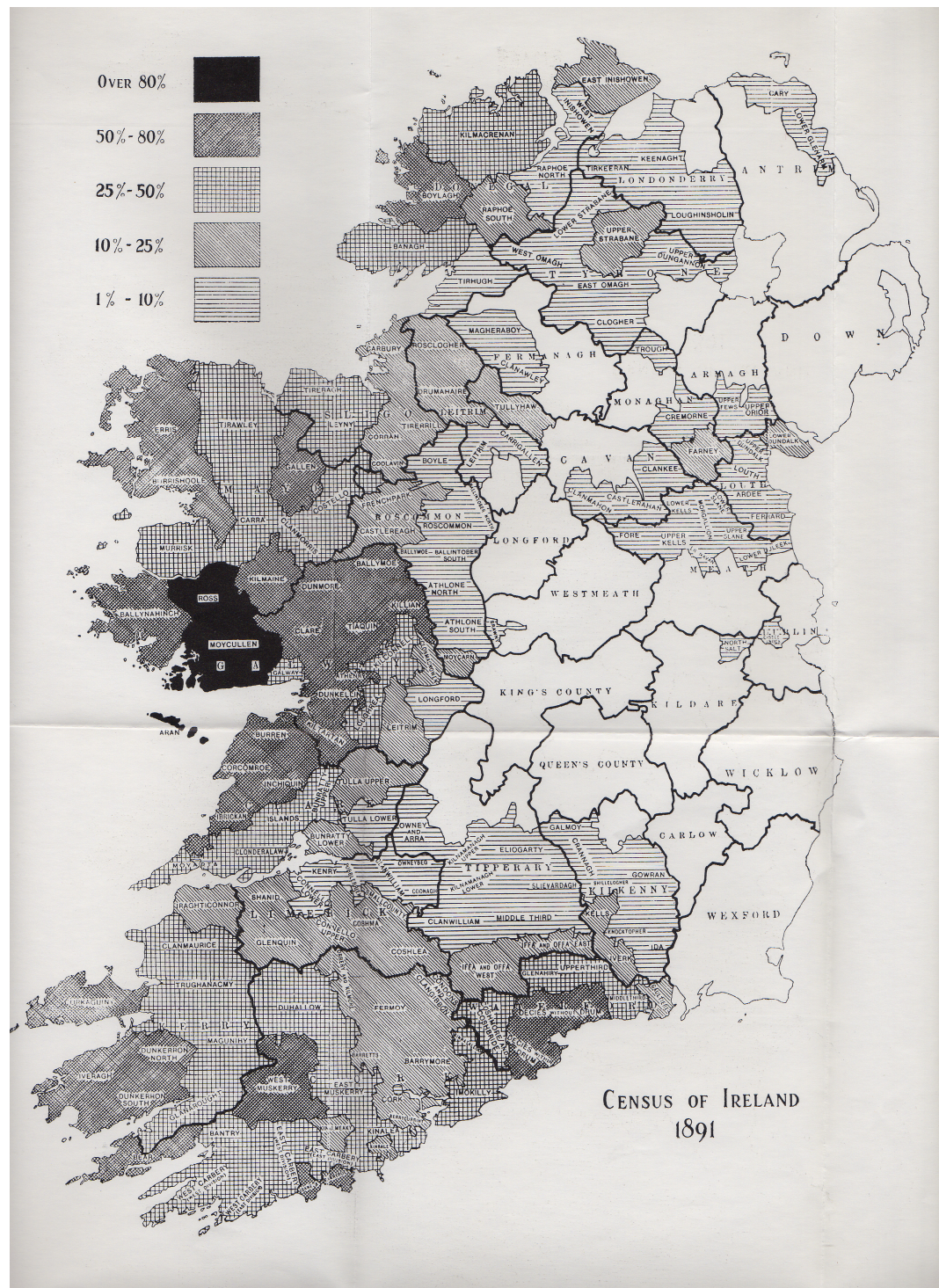
for the next century, extreme poverty and insecurity of life at home compelled the Irish people to accept emigration as a permanent feature of their society. Therefore, the acquisition of English became a permanent practical preparation for life for a large proportion of the population living in the poorer districts where Irish had survived. The emigrant groups brought with them no incentive to maintain the Irish language (Ó Huallacháin, 1991: 9).⁶

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, and as a result of “the new vogue of the Romantic literature which was sweeping over Britain and the Continent” (Ó Fiaich, 1969: 107), a new awareness and concern directed at the Irish language and culture began to grow among the educated middle classes. This interest found expression in the founding of a number of societies (e.g. the Royal Irish Academy in 1785, the Ossianic Society in 1853, the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language in 1876, the Gaelic Union in 1879), some of which were characterised also by the “strong aristocratic ties within the Ascendancy” (Greene, 1972: 13). Over the decades they attracted “a more varied membership socially, and intellectually a more serious concern with the contemporary language and the speech of everyday life (Greene, 1972: 14).

⁶ However, as Verma *et al.* (2000) point out, this phenomenon may not have been as serious as normally portrayed as in several cases these speakers were so poor that they could not afford to leave.

These societies however were usually concerned with the study of ancient literature or historical documents and annals (Ó hAilín, 1969).

Figure 1.3: Irish language situation/erosion in the 19th century (from Ó Cuív, 1951)



The staggering decline of native Irish speakers, not to mention the decline of monoglot Irish speakers brought a change in the response from the people involved with

the welfare and safeguarding of the language. Thus, although prior to the famine, interest in Irish was shown mainly by the educated classes and was “essentially antiquarian or scholarly in motive, from the 1870s onwards it is the preservation of the living vernacular from extinction which was the motivating force for the activities of a succession of groups and societies” (Ó Tuathaigh, 1990: 2-3).

During the greater part of the 19th century the enthusiasm and idealism of the country tended towards politics rather than literature. The revival movement began when the Gaelic League was formed in 1893 to rekindle interest in Ireland's cultural past and particularly in Gaelic language and literature. Ireland, responding to the nationalist impetus that had swept European countries, was moving toward revolution and the establishment of its political independence.

The Gaelic League (or *Conradh na Gaeilge*) was founded in the last decade of the nineteenth century as noted above principally as a cultural protest against the extinction of the Irish Language. In a paper delivered before the Irish National Literary Society in Dublin on 25 November 1892 Douglas Hyde, one of its founders, spoke of "The necessity for de-anglicising Ireland" by preserving Irish, the essential key of Ireland's culture and identity, as a national language and extending its use both as a spoken language and as a creative language for literature.

After a slow start, the League started opening branches and offices all over the country (by 1904 there were 504 branches (Ó hAilín, 1969), while by 1908 there were about 950 branches established throughout Ireland, the UK and the USA (Ó Riagáin, 1988c)), recruiting Irish teachers and holding adult classes and competitions in Irish-speaking, music and dancing (*Feiseanna*). The role of the League in preserving the language differed from all previous societies in that it had a different organization and objectives (Ó hAilín, 1969).

The latter focussed mainly on education, namely on developing teaching methods and teacher training, and on making Irish a requirement for matriculation at university, but also on “developing a standard language and promoting a creative literature, securing the employment of competent Irish-speakers, and maintaining the Irish-speaking heartland” (Ó Riagáin, 1988c), all strategies that were later to be adopted by the Irish Free State. Following Partition:

[t]he League was soon to see its policies accepted by a native government whose declared aim was the restoration of the language and the Gaelicisation of the new State. The first Dáil created a Ministry of the Irish Language and chose the President of the League as its first Minister. After 1922 the implementation of the policy of language restoration became a matter for the Government. There was now less reason for the existence of a

voluntary movement, since the State had taken over its function. As a natural result, the League lost much of its drive and impetus (Ó hAilín, 1969: 99).

Although the League failed principally in extending the use of the spoken tongue, it certainly represented “a major retarding and reviving force” (Hindley, 1990: 20). It successfully changed attitudes towards the Irish language and promoted (with the publication of textbooks, plays, short stories, folktales, novels, translations from English and other languages) the cultivation of the Irish language through modern literature and, particularly, through the changes it encouraged in the education system.

Indeed, as Crowley observes with regard to all the political and historical events that led to independence:

[as] a largely urban and lower-middle-class movement with negligible take-up in the Gaeltacht, it stood little chance of defeating the forces which were causing the decline of Irish. What it did successfully, however, was to act as a focus for cultural nationalism and to channel energies (2000: 176).

1.3.3 The revival effort and Government language policies in Éire

Since partition in 1921, the government tried to support the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland through a number of policies implemented in the fields of education, employment, economy, cultural and social activities, and the mass media.

After independence in 1922, the position of Irish was immediately strengthened by the new State which was determined to restore Irish as the first language of the whole country. However, successive governments decided to replace the initial aim of restoration with that of language preservation in a bilingual context. In the first Constitution of 1922, Irish was designated as 'the national language', and in the 1937 Constitution, which is still in force, it is stated that the Irish language is the first official national language.

Shortly after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, a special commission was set up to analyse and examine the problems of the Gaeltacht. What emerged was the extremely serious economic nature of these problems. The Gaeltacht areas were subject to extensive out-migration and depopulation caused primarily by an undeveloped economy and, subsequently, deprivation and poverty.

The political strategy adopted by the language revival commission addressed three dimensions: maintenance in Irish-speaking areas, revival in the rest of the country, and provision of infrastructure.

In 1934 an important and controversial measure was put into practice: the so-called *deontas*, a £2 grant (subsequently raised to £5 and then to the current €260 per year) that was given to each child who spoke Irish at home. It was, and still is, considered to be a controversial measure even in the Gaeltacht because, as some critics of this scheme have claimed, it was like paying Irish speakers to use the language. Moreover, though it was initially designed to encourage parents to use and maintain Irish as the language spoken at home, it is also a key factor in the evaluation of applications for *Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge*⁷ and substantial housing grants. On the other hand, it should also be noted that the €260 Grant Scheme does stimulate continued use of Irish in bilingual homes and represents an incentive for returned emigrants and English-speaking inhabitants in the Gaeltacht to encourage their children to learn the language. Its implementation meant that for the first time "the main emphasis was on the use of the language itself and on the choice facing each individual family" (Ó Gadhra, 1988: 257).

The strategies that are being implemented at present have basically remained the same as they were when they were launched after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922.

First of all, the maintenance of the existing boundaries of language use in the Gaeltacht and the revival of the language elsewhere by promoting positive attitudes towards the language as well as fostering the support for Irish as a living language (Bord na Gaeilge, 1997). A second strategy has been to increase the number of Irish speakers through educational initiatives. Finally, the improvement and provision of the constitutional and legal status of Irish and Irish speakers and the standardisation of the language are also important weapons in the battle against language shift.

Language standardization can be defined as:

⁷ *Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge* (SLG) is an Irish-language use support scheme which was administered by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs until the end of the 2011/2012 school year. SLG has been replaced by the Family Language Support Scheme which will be administered by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The aim of this new scheme is "to strengthen the Irish language as the household and community language in the Gaeltacht, in accordance with the *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030*". Under this programme, the Department intends to undertake 12 specific measures to support Gaeltacht families who are raising their children through Irish or who wish to raise their children through Irish (<http://www.ahg.gov.ie/en/AnGhaeltacht/Language-CentredProgrammes/FamilyLanguageSupportProgramme/>, last accessed: 21 giugno 2012)

the process by which a language has been codified in some way. That process usually involves the development of such things as grammars, spelling books, and dictionaries, and possibly a literature (Wardhaugh, 2006: 33).

This entails that a spoken form of a particular language is chosen as the preferred variety to be used as the written variety with the intention of making this particular variety the official one. The writing down of a particular dialect or register among those that are in use at a particular time establishes it as the standard language.

Such a practice is particularly important in lieu of the consequences that it has

not only for the destiny of local dialects that are different from the one chosen that is different from the standard but also for the type of idealization made by students of language (Duranti, 1997: 45).

Duranti also specifies that the standardization process is generally brought about by the creation of a national state whereby “the process of state formation creates the condition for a unified linguistic market where one linguistic variety acquires the status of standard language” (1997: 45).

In Ireland, when the newly independent state was established in 1922 proclaiming Irish as its official language, three main dialects were spoken none of which had “the prestige and social status necessary to command respect as a norm” (Ó Baoill, 1988: 111). Nonetheless, since a written standard was required for government documents, over a time span of forty years, a civil service department was established that undertook the task of standardizing the spelling and the grammar of Irish. This process culminated with the publication in 1957 of the official standard guide, *Gramadach na Gaeilge agus Litriú na Gaeilge* (‘The Grammar and Spelling of Irish’) (Ó Baoill, 1988). The official variety was created according to a set of rules that aimed at simplifying the spelling and which displayed a ‘slight penchant’ for the Munster dialect (Ó Siadhail, 1983), which “became the model for second language learners and even for officialese” (Höglund, 2004). Beside criticisms directed at the way in which this new standard was created (Ó Laoire, 1997: 22), its reception has been mixed, with most negative opinions verging on the fact that it contributed to the stigmatization of the other dialectal varieties (Breathnach, 1964) especially because it was felt that “certain dialects had been given too little consideration. Nevertheless it was agreed generally that its advantages outweighed its disadvantages, and it has since been adopted to a large extent in government publications, newspapers, periodicals and schoolbooks” (Ó Cuív, 1969b: 30).

In a similar vein, Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann ('the Linguistics Institute of Ireland') created an artificial spoken variety named "lárchanúint" ('central dialect') in the mid 1980s, which was the result of the mixing of some of the commonest aspects of the various dialects spoken in the surviving *Gaeltachtaí*.⁸

The Department for the Gaeltacht (*Roinn na Gaeltachta*)⁹ and the developmental agency for the Gaeltacht (*Gaeltarra Éireanna*) were set up in 1956 and 1958, respectively. They were responsible for the economic development of the Gaeltacht through policies aimed at curbing mass emigration. Among the various initiatives undertaken by *Gaeltarra Éireanna* to attract industrial investment (and thus avoid young people from leaving the area) two industrial sites were developed in the Gaeltacht. Although this initiative was successful in creating employment and attracting business in rural and poor areas, it did not succeed in creating an Irish-dominated employment environment.

In 1979, *Gaeltarra Éireanna* was restructured as a political response to the pressure exerted by the Gaeltacht to have a more active and direct role in the promotion and preservation of the Irish language. The new agency was named *Údarás na Gaeltachta* (the Gaeltacht Authority), its role being to sustain economic development in Gaeltacht areas and communities while fostering at the same time both the promotion and the preservation of the Irish language and culture.

With specific reference to Irish language maintenance policies, the agency is responsible for a number of activities and initiatives designed to "promote the social, physical and economic development of Gaeltacht areas and to strengthen Irish as the principal community language in the Gaeltacht" (CSO, 2006: 124) with a particular focus on preserving and promoting "the cultural, economic and social welfare of the Gaeltacht as the main source of the living language; the reversal of the decline of Irish as the principal means of communication in the Gaeltacht and the extension of its use in the rest of the country, both North and South" (www.ahg.gov.ie/en/Irish/).

⁸ This task was awarded to *Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann* (the Linguistics Institute of Ireland) by *An Roinn Oideachais* (The Department of Education) with the aim of creating a single pronunciation guide for *An Foclóir Póca*.

⁹ Since 1993, the Department for the Gaeltacht has been known as:

- Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht (1993–1997)
- Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (1997–2002)
- Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (2002–2010)
- Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs (2010–2011)
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2011–)

1.4 Irish-speaking areas

1.4.1 In Éire

The Irish language in the Republic of Ireland is both a survival language in a number of areas scattered along the western seaboard and a revival language in specific (urban) settings. It follows, therefore, that the vast regions of Ireland that were once part of the Gaeltacht have been broken up, and eaten away, under English-language influence, over the generations, declining not only in population and extent, but also in the areas of life and the range of activities conducted through Irish (Ó Gadhra, 1988: 252). These regions as already noted are termed collectively *Gaeltachtaí* and their precise boundaries, for administrative purposes, are from time to time designated by state order.

Today only a few of the officially designated areas in certain peripheral counties of the Irish Republic fall under the description of ‘Gaeltacht’. The Irish term ‘Gaeltacht’ has traditionally been employed to describe a substantially Irish-speaking community or district. However, the fairly recent phenomenon of the establishment of small urban communities of Irish speakers by virtue of its relevance in terms of language revival outside the officially designated Gaeltacht areas perhaps should be taken into account in rethinking the definition of what exactly a Gaeltacht area can be construed as.

The *Gaeltachtaí* are almost entirely concentrated on the western periphery of the Republic of Ireland and more precisely in the counties of Donegal (in the north-west), Mayo and Galway (in the west), Kerry, Cork and Waterford (in the south), and Meath (in the east).¹⁰ 86,517 people live in these officially designated Irish-speaking areas (the Gaeltacht) - 62,157 of them (72.6% of the total) reporting themselves as Irish speakers in the 2002 census of population. The three main Irish dialects that are spoken in Ireland are Munster, Connacht, and Ulster (Ó Cuív, 1951; Ó Siadhail, 1989; Russell, 1995). They are the remnants of what formed “the chain of mutual intelligibility which formerly connected the continuum of dialects from North to South” and which was broken thus weakening “the sense of linguistic unity and community” (McCloskey, 2006: 11).

The role of the Gaeltacht in the general language policies of the Republic has always been considered fundamental (Mercator, 2001; Ó Giollagáin *et al.*, 2007). The Gaeltacht was meant to become the instrumental factor in the strategy aimed at

¹⁰ The Rath Cairn Gaeltacht in County Meath received official recognition in 1967. It was the only one to survive after having been established in 1935, along with two other communities, as an extreme attempt to revive the Irish language in the east, by transplanting 27 families from Connemara on land owned by the Land Commission.

reversing language shift and decline. Nevertheless, it soon became clear that not only was it not possible to restore the Irish language as the first language all over Ireland, but that all language policies were to be aimed at maintaining Irish language use at current levels in the Gaeltacht, promoting, at the same time, the revival of Irish in the rest of Ireland (Antonini, Corrigan and Li Wei, 2002).

In 1925, the Cosgrave Government appointed a Gaeltacht Commission (*Coimisiún Na Gaeltachta*) with the aim and task of enquiring into the condition of the Gaeltacht. With regard to the definition of the boundaries of Irish speaking areas, the Commission recommended that:

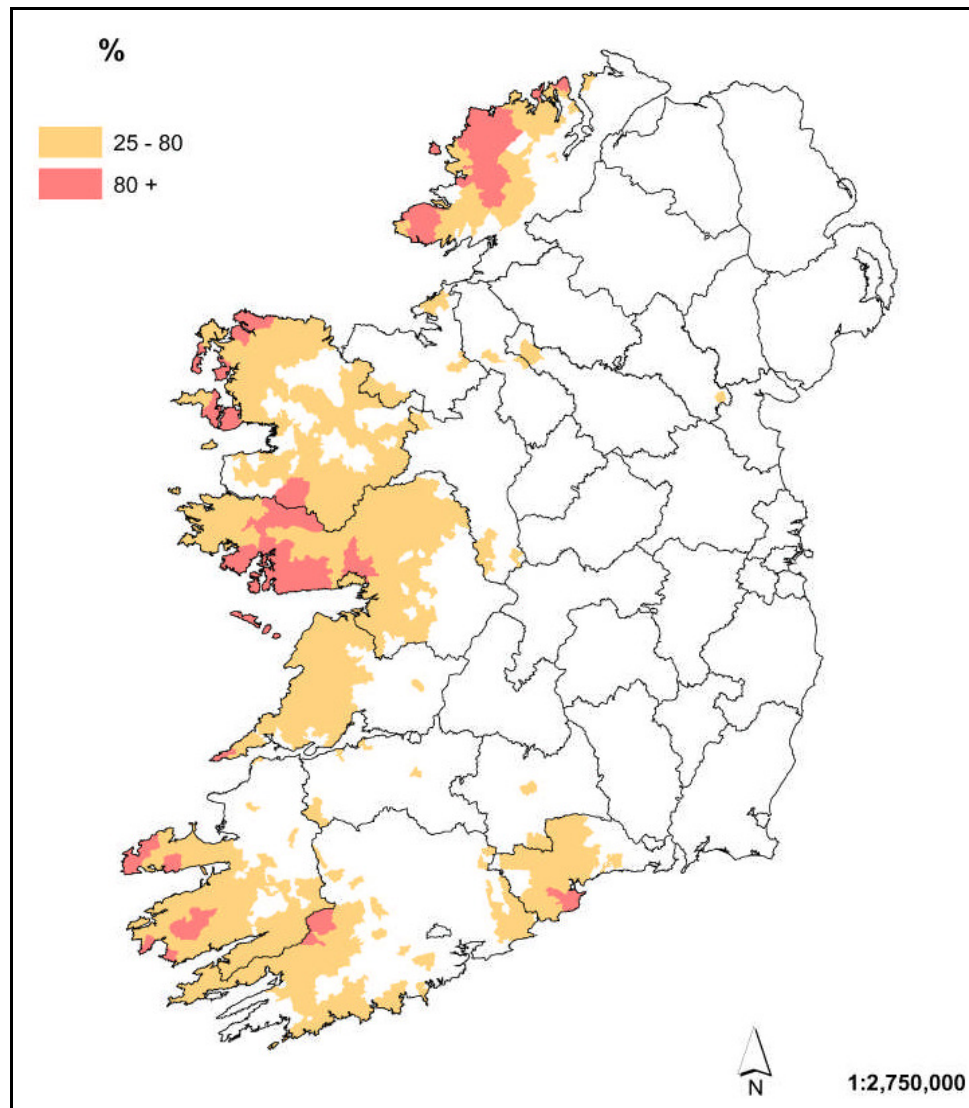
where 80% or more of the population of a district is Irish Speaking the district may be regarded as an "Irish Speaking District", regardless of the extent to which English may have an ascendancy in daily use under the circumstances of today, and that where not less than 25% and not more than 79% of the population of any district is Irish speaking it be regarded as a "Partly Irish Speaking District" (quoted in Ó Huallacháin, 1991: 36).

In 1925 the *Fíor-Ghaeltachtaí* (the mostly Irish-speaking districts) had a total "... population of 164,774 with 146,821 (89,1%) speakers of Irish", whereas the *Breac-Ghaeltachtaí* (the partly Irish-speaking districts) had a "total population of 294,890 with 110,585 Irish-speakers" (Ó Huallacháin, 1991: 36-7). As Walsh (2002: 3) reports "although the Commission had reported an alarming decrease in the number of native speakers - 31% between the Census of 1911 and 1926 - their evidence indicated that Irish speaking communities remained in 12 of the 26 counties" (see figure 1.4 below). However, the greater part of the huge Breac-Ghaeltacht areas were already English-speaking at community level. Most of those who could speak Irish were in the older age-group and showed little or no desire to return to the use of Irish as their everyday language. The same was increasingly true even in some of the *Fíor-Ghaeltachtaí* which were relentlessly shrinking in speakers due to emigration, unemployment and lack of social infrastructure (Ó Gadhra, 1988).

The results presented by the Commission have been subject to harsh criticism. First of all, with reference to the data on the number of Irish speakers living in Gaeltacht areas and on the method and staff employed to collect such data. Secondly, for the role played by politics and the favouritism involved in the process of delimiting the Gaeltacht. Indeed, Betts very explicitly highlights that "the boundaries of these so-called Irish-speaking areas have suffered a bit from political gerrymandering and favouritism" (Betts, 1976: 226).

The census carried out by the Gaeltacht Commission was entrusted to the national police force known locally as ‘the Guards/Gardaí’ (*Na Gardaí Síochána* – ‘the guardians of peace’). The latter, however, were badly qualified to judge degrees of knowledge of Irish, as only 3.4% of them were themselves native speakers (Hindley, 1991). This resulted in both an exaggeration of the strength of Irish where the language was already quite strong, with reports that in some cases it reached 100% and they also overestimated: (i) the already exaggerated rates reported by the previous Census of population, and (ii) reports of no language use at all in those areas that averaged 25% of Irish speakers (Hindley, 1991: 67-8).

Figure 1.4: The Gaeltacht in 1926 (from Ó Giollagáin *et al.*, 2007)



The Gaeltacht Commission was also criticized for choosing to ignore how serious the state of fragmentation (in terms of Irish language use) of the *Fíor-* and *Breac-Ghaeltachtaí* was and for having defined such areas as if they were more

homogeneous than they actually were, “the rationale was that the language would, by including [areas where Irish was fading or had already disappeared] in a Gaeltacht, creep back” (Betts, 1976: 227).

Nonetheless, and despite the exaggeration of the size of the Irish-speaking population, it was clear that the situation obtaining in the Gaeltacht was decidedly worrying.

The Gaeltacht Commission included a series of recommendations in its report (Government of Ireland, 1926), which included:

- the provision of free secondary school education in the Gaeltacht (Lee, 1989: 135);
- ensuring linguistic competence among civil servants in Gaeltacht areas;
- condemnation of the Anglicisation of the forms of place names;
- decongestion of specific areas “through planned migration of ‘homogeneous communities’”.

Moreover, it also identified four groups that had a particular responsibility in relation to the linguistic situation pertaining in the Gaeltacht due to their accepted roles as leaders in the community, i.e. the Catholic clergy, the professions, the press, and directors of industrial and commercial establishments (Ó Tuathaigh, 1990: 4-5). Nonetheless, Gaeltacht areas did not receive the right amount and the right type of help from the State and successive governments. As Ó Tuathaigh notes:

During the following thirty years or so relatively few of these recommendations were implemented with any energy or consistency, and even where some effort was made to implement some of the proposals the results were disappointing (1990: 5).

In 1956 the Government re-delimited the boundaries of the Gaeltacht. The boundaries defined in 1926 underwent a contraction that excluded all the Breac-Ghaeltachtaí and those *Fíor-Ghaeltacht* districts, which, in reality, had a lower range than the one required to be categorized as such (i.e. 80%). As Hindley states:

Redelimitation was conducted in full knowledge that the decennial census returns at face value were no guide to the distribution of the native and habitual Irish-speaking population which the state desired to help (1991: 74).

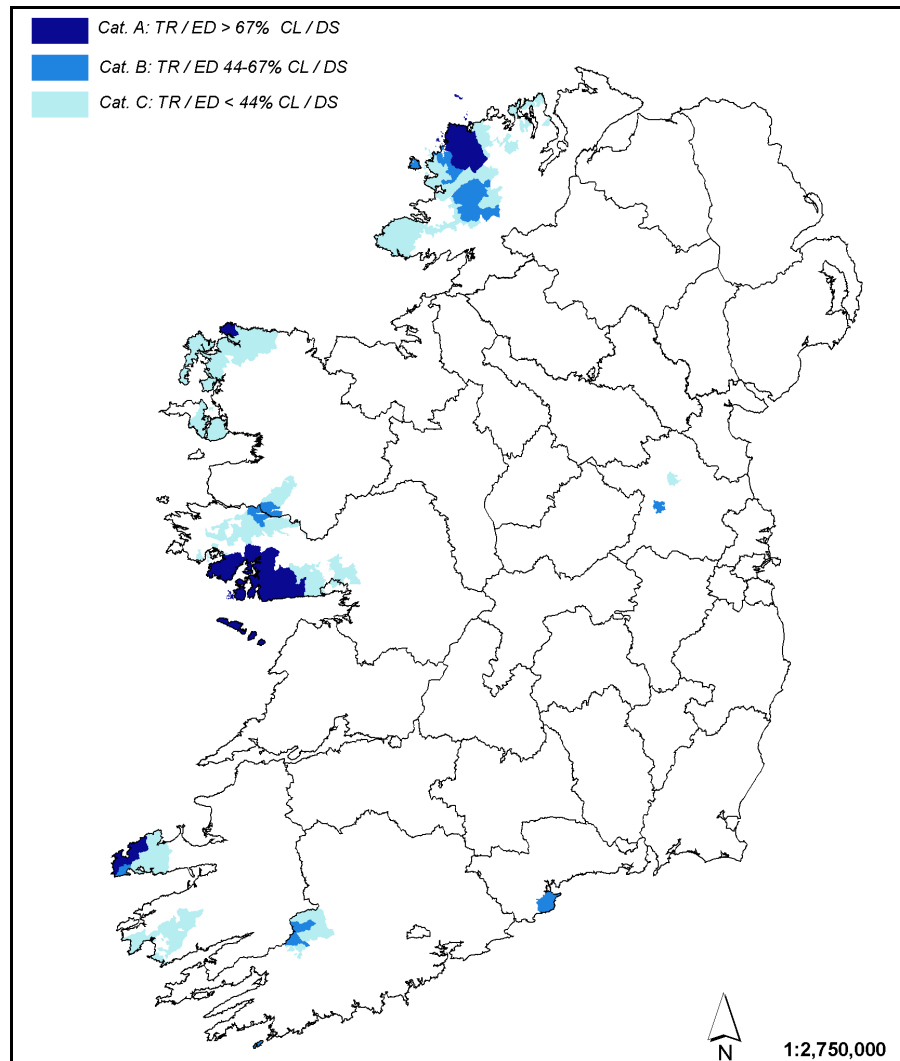
Under the Gaeltacht Areas Order, 1956, 84 DEDs and parts of 58 other DEDs in Counties Galway, Donegal, Mayo, Kerry, Cork and Waterford were recognised as Gaeltacht areas (Coimisiún Na Gaeltachta, 2002: 16).

The current delimitation of Gaeltacht areas is basically the same as it was in 1956. A small number of other areas have been added in the meantime. The small Gaeltacht community at Ráth Cairn in Co. Meath (in the east) is the only 'new' Gaeltacht established by the state in its effort to revive the Irish language that has survived and prospered. Though established in 1935-36, it received full recognition only in 1967.

As reported by *Coimisiún Na Gaeltachta*, in 2000 the Irish language situation in some areas that had previously been considered Gaeltachtaí was so weak “that it cannot reasonably be argued that Irish is a community language there” (16) with English being the dominant language even in those communities that represented the last strongholds of prevalent Irish language use. In 2000, only 17 DEDs (one less as compared to the 1996 census results) in the whole Gaeltacht contained at least 75% of speakers who used the language on a daily basis. Moreover, if the criterion for defining Gaeltacht boundaries as initially agreed by *Coimisiún Na Gaeltachta* in 1926 was that 80% of the community must be Irish speakers, then, according to the 2002 Census, only 14 DEDs, out of the existing 154, would actually qualify for Gaeltacht status.

The boundaries of the Gaeltacht were re-defined by Ó Giollagáin *et al.* (2007) who put forward a new classification based on three different categories of Irish language communities, Gaeltacht districts A, B and C (for a detailed list of all the electoral districts in the three categories see Appendix D). As detailed in figure 1.5 below, according to this redefinition of the Gaeltacht, which was based on a sociolinguistic profiling process and a statistical analysis of the language data from Census 2002 and the data from *Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge*, as well as “information reported to researchers at public and focus group meetings held in the different Gaeltacht areas” (*Ibid.*: 13), Irish-speaking areas have shrunk considerably.

Figure 1.5: The Gaeltacht 2003/2004 according to the three reclassified categories (from Ó Giollagáin *et al.*, 2007)



1.4.2 In Northern Ireland

Up until 1921 and the partition of Ireland into two different political entities, “Irish was used by a number of residual communities of native speakers in Northern Ireland” (Mercator 2004: 2). These were scattered across all six counties, and in the previous decades had already begun to decline. Even though

small Irish communities were to be found in [...] the north-east of Ulster, in Central Ulster, [...] in the southern reaches of Armagh and Down [...], in southern and western Tyrone [...] and in south Fermanagh (Mac Giolla Chríost, 2002: 434)

they had almost disappeared by the middle of the century (Mac Póilin, 1997: 183).

Before the Ulster plantations took place, the Irish language in Ulster was not under any particular threat of decline. The latter had been brought about by a series of

policies, which focused on allocating the lands owned by the Catholic, mainly Irish-speaking, natives, and developing urban centres inhabited by the non Irish-speaking settlers with the aim of “introducing new patterns of land ownership which disrupted the established social network structures of its rural communities” (Corrigan, 1999: 60).

Thus the Plantations in Ulster caused a shift of power, which was particularly relevant in the economic, political, and religious spheres.

As Mac Giolla Chríost observes, following the Plantation “the territory of Ulster, the former heartland of the Great Irishry, [was] marked by several zones of penetration by other languages, [...] namely English, Scots Gaelic and Scots or Lallans” (2002: 429), with English being the prominent language in most areas of the Plantation scheme and making inroads in the surrounding areas.

According to Ó Casaide’s (1930) report on the Irish language situation in Belfast and County Down between 1601 and 1850, “[t]he decline of the Irish language in County Down – in so far as it was due to the intrusion of “planters” or other foreigners – may probably be traced back as far as the early part of the 17th century, though its decay as a spoken language did not become serious until two hundred years later” (1930: 3). In 1851, the total number of Irish speakers for County Down and Belfast were respectively 1153 and 295.

However, as Ó Casaide and other authors point out (e.g. Ó Cuív, 1951), before the 1881 census the language question was included only in a footnote and not in a separate column. The implications are that the number of Irish speakers may have been understated because no specific question on Irish-speaking was included in the official census of population.

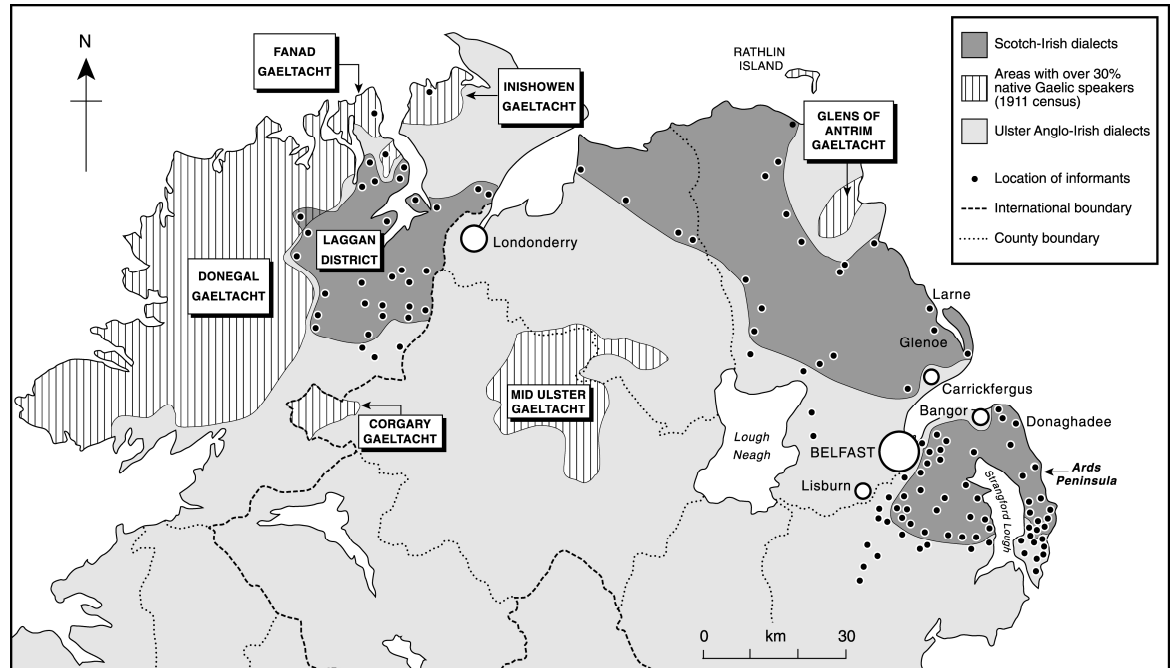
As the Census returns from 1851 and 1891 in Table 1.1 indicate, a comparison between the number of both Irish speakers as a whole and of monoglot speakers in particular shows that over a period of four decades the Irish language had undergone a steady and drastic decline.

Table 1.1: Irish language decline in Northern Ireland 1851-1891 (adapted from Ó Cuív, 1951)

COUNTY	1851	Monoglot speakers	%	1891	Monoglot speakers	%
ANTRIM	3,033	11	1.2	885	-	0.4
ARMAGH	13,736	148	7	3,486	2	2.4
DERRY	5,406	28	2.8	2,723	5	1.8
DOWN	1,153	2	0.4	590	-	0.3
FERMANAGH	2,704	10	2.3	561	-	0.8
TYRONE	12,892	450	5	6,687	7	3.9
BELFAST CITY	295	-	0.3	917	-	0.4

While an examination of the Censuses of 1851 and 1891 gives us an idea of the change that was taking place in the six counties that were soon to become a separate political and territorial unit, it does not give us any idea of the distribution of Irish speakers since up to 1901 the smallest administrative units taken into consideration for statistical purposes were the baronies (which were quite large geographical areas).

Figure 1.6: Early 20th century Irish-speaking Ulster (from Corrigan, 2010: 127)



Therefore, as Ó Cuív notes “it is often difficult [...] when the number of Irish speakers in a barony is small, to say whether they represent an Irish-speaking community or were simply isolated individuals who retained Irish speech in spite of their Anglicised surroundings” (1951: 22-23). Indeed, “although there was probably no county in Ulster without an Irish-speaking community of some sort, it was only in Donegal, especially in the west and north, that Irish was the prevailing language” (Ó Cuív, 1951: 24-25). The high numbers of Irish speakers were present mainly in four counties, namely Armagh, Monaghan, Tyrone, and Cavan (each one with over 10,000 Irish speakers), and they were concentrated in those areas that were closer to what eventually became the border and the Irish-speaking areas in Donegal (see figure 1.6 above).¹¹

¹¹ “Namely Upper Orior and Upper Fews in Armagh, Farney in Monaghan, and Upper Strabane in Tyrone. (...) Derry, which had over 5,000 Irish speakers in Loughinsholin Barony, while nearly all of the 3,000 Irish speakers in Antrim were in Lower Glenarm and in Cary which includes Rathlin Island. Fermanagh had a number of Irish-speaking areas, while in Down, the county with the least number of Irish speakers, there seems to have been an Irish-speaking community in Upper Iveagh” (Ó Cuív, 1951: 24-25).

After 1921 there is a shortage of data on the number of Irish speakers in the six counties comprising Northern Ireland due to the fact, as noted above, that the language question was deliberately removed from the Census of Northern Ireland after this time and was not restored until 1991.

Following the Government of Ireland Act (1920) and the ratification of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, six out of the nine Ulster counties in the northeast of the island became part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. A different political treatment of the Irish language caused a rapid decline and its disappearance over a very short period.¹² However, as noted by Mac Giolla Chríost:

The abandonment of the language by the Irish is an act, however, which is not explicable in terms of the necessity of the acquisition of the English language. [...] The Census returns from the 19th century suggest that it is more likely that these events merely contributed to the momentum of a process that was already underway (2002: 431-432).

The last available data (with an increase from 1.3 in 1891 to 2.3 in 1911) from the 1921 census show an increase in self-reported Irish speakers which, however, was probably influenced, as in the rest of the island, by the language revival movement and Gaelic League activities¹³ (Mac Giolla Chríost, 2002) or as a result of underreporting beforehand.

Nowadays, Irish in Northern Ireland is spoken by a number of families and communities scattered throughout the six counties, which comprise three categories of speakers: i) second language learners (i.e. all those people who learnt Irish in school or in adult classes); ii) Irish language speakers from one of the Gaeltacht areas in the Republic; and iii) children who have been brought up in Irish-speaking homes (by parents who had learnt Irish as a second language).

According to the 2001 UK census of population, and as shown in table 1.2 below, the highest numbers of persons aged 3 and over who reported some knowledge of Irish live in the Local Government Districts of Belfast (36,317) and Newry and Mourne (16,965), while the lowest numbers, unsurprisingly perhaps given their majority Protestant populations, were recorded in the Districts of Carrickfergus (705) and Larne (1,309).

¹² The last available official censal data on the Irish language in the six counties comprising Northern Ireland date back to 1911.

¹³ The first branch of the Gaelic League was founded in Belfast in 1895 and “Protestants were members from the beginning in Belfast” (Ó Snodaigh, 1995: 85). In 1899, nine branches had been set up.

In general terms, all the districts¹⁴ that recorded the lowest numbers of people reporting some knowledge of Irish are located in the two counties, Antrim and Down, that were located on the eastern edge of the areas subjected to the plantation and that constituted a Scottish Pale before 1609:

[i]t is plausible, therefore, that [these] two counties [...] acted as a cultural entrepot for many Scottish settlers. This Scottish Pale undoubtedly eased the way for the undertakers and their tenants from one hard land into another (Hill, 1993: 29).¹⁵

¹⁴ The six counties of Northern Ireland (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone) are no longer used for local government purposes. Following the establishment in 1973 of the Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 1971 and the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 the previous system was replaced by an administrative division based on districts. County Antrim is divided into the following nine district councils: Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Belfast City, Carrickfergus, Larne, Lisburn, Moyle and Newtownabbey. County Armagh is divided between three district councils: Armagh City and District Council, part of Craigavon Borough Council, and part of Newry and Mourne District Council. County Down: Ards, Banbridge, Craigavon, Down, Lisburn, Newry and Mourne, North Down. Fermanagh District Council is the only district council in Northern Ireland that contains all of the county it is named after. The district councils covering Londonderry County are Coleraine, Derry City, Limavady, Magherafelt; and part of Cookstown District Council, which is largely in County Tyrone. County Tyrone is split into four districts: Strabane, Cookstown, Dungannon and South Tyrone and Omagh.

¹⁵ See also Corrigan (2010) for a detailed account of the pre-Plantation period in Northern Ireland.

Table 1.2: Irish language speaking in Northern Ireland for District Council Areas (from www.nisra.gov.uk¹⁶, last accessed 29 June 2011)

	All persons aged 3 and over	Persons aged 3 and over who:						
		Understand spoken Irish but cannot read, write or speak Irish	Speak but do not read or write Irish	Speak and read but do not write Irish	Speak, read, write and understand Irish	Have other combination of skills	Have some knowledge of Irish	Have no knowledge of Irish
Northern Ireland	1617957	36479	24536	7183	75125	24167	167490	1450467
Antrim	46220	795	524	188	1630	500	3637	42583
Ards	70517	529	285	87	879	348	2128	68389
Armagh	51875	1707	1076	323	3408	1123	7637	44238
Ballymena	56422	694	421	109	1191	400	2815	53607
Ballymoney	25759	391	271	73	785	292	1812	23947
Banbridge	39643	565	319	95	1082	377	2438	37205
Belfast	267716	7430	5493	1610	17639	4145	36317	231399
Carrickfergus	36231	193	113	35	261	103	705	35526
Castlereagh	63951	611	390	147	1189	402	2739	61212
Coleraine	54135	678	473	101	1632	503	3387	50748
Cookstown	31203	1052	618	168	1824	835	4497	26706
Craigavon	77358	1643	1218	363	3610	1239	8073	69285
Derry	100423	2876	1762	590	6459	2125	13812	86611
Down	61272	1518	980	234	2408	859	5999	55273
Dungannon	45598	1722	1259	347	4074	1309	8711	36887
Fermanagh	55215	1567	934	320	2995	1295	7111	48104
Larne	29719	297	227	63	484	238	1309	28410
Limavady	30972	760	525	135	1337	600	3357	27615
Lisburn	104163	2022	1398	342	3520	881	8163	96000
Magherafelt	37996	1434	1059	275	2932	964	6664	31332
Moyle	15279	529	299	94	941	333	2196	13083
Newry and Mourne	83130	3576	2453	757	7545	2634	16965	66165
Newtownabbey	77043	705	482	150	1503	497	3337	73706
North Down	73802	543	261	100	743	326	1973	71829
Omagh	45811	1689	1097	319	3182	1128	7415	38396
Strabane	36504	953	599	158	1872	711	4293	32211

¹⁶ Full URL: www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/.../uv014_elb.xls

1.5 Irish language policies in the United Kingdom

Until the ratification of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and of the European Charter for Minority and Regional Languages in 2001, Irish in Northern Ireland, unlike its counterpart in Éire, did not have a legal status nor any specific policy aimed at promoting and supporting it in the field of education, cultural activities, economic and social life, or the media.

The ratification of the Good Friday Agreement meant that, in relation to the Irish language, the British Government agreed, amongst other things, to promote the language, remove all obstacles to its maintenance or development, encourage and facilitate Irish-medium education and increase its presence in the media.

For the first time since Northern Ireland was established as a distinct entity, Irish in Northern Ireland was legitimised and supported by the UK Government. Before that, as the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) reported in 1993, there were many complaints with regard to the priority and support given to the Irish language, and obviously its speakers, by the UK Government. The main areas of complaint concerned:

the question of funding for Irish-language-medium education; insufficient funding for cultural activities; the lack of Irish language programmes on electronic media; the difference between the promotion of other Celtic languages (i.e. Welsh and Scots Gaelic) and mere tolerance of the Irish language; the attitudes by public bodies, including the Security forces, to the use of the language (CAJ, 1993: 1).

One of the most blatant symptoms of this neglect on behalf of the UK Government, was the removal of the language question from the Census in 1921, which “was felt as a clear message to Irish speakers that, not only was the state not prepared to recognise their linguistic rights and needs, it was not even prepared to recognise their existence” (CAJ, 1993: 6). It is often argued that one of the reasons for this policy of ‘neglect’ can be ascribed to the fact that Irish is perceived to be an important marker of ethnic identity, and that both communities in Northern Ireland - Catholic and Protestant - regard it as such (O’Reilly, 1999, 2001; Mac Giolla Chríost, 2002). The politicization of the Irish language has created a situation in which:

Catholic nationalists speak easily of ‘our own language’, whether they speak Irish or not, while most of the Protestant and unionist community regard the language as alien (Mac Póilin, 1990: 1).

As Nic Craith observes “equality and the question of power relations are usually central to any discussion regarding conflict in Northern Ireland” (Nic Craith, 1999: 494) and this includes the language question. However, the interface between language and society in Northern Ireland is not so clear cut as to determine the identification of one

political side with Irish and the automatic opposition to the language of the other side, on the contrary, the generally perceived two-dimensional framework of identity-related issues in Northern Ireland “is false and limiting” (Nic Craith, 2003: 1).

The language movement in Northern Ireland has always been characterised by the fact that it is fundamentally revivalist in nature and largely based on the voluntary efforts of the revivalists and Irish speakers. In this way it is reminiscent of the treatment of exogenous minorities within the UK and marks it as different in certain respects to support offered to the other Celtic languages of the British Isles. As a matter of fact, despite the fact that autochthonous, and sometimes extinct, languages are “offered governmental and institutional support [...] at state and community level, whereas the heritage languages of the newer ethnic minority communities are not” (Verma *et al.*, 2000: 512-513) it would also appear that a disparity of treatment also exists between the support given to the different Celtic languages spoken in the United Kingdom both in policy and in practice (Nic Craith, 1999). Dunbar’s (2003) analysis of the paragraphs of the European Charter for Minority Languages, for example, chosen and ratified by the UK government shows that not only did the British government agree to ratify fewer paragraphs and sub-paragraphs for the Irish language (i.e. 36, one above the required minimum) compared to Welsh and Scots Gaelic (52 and 39 respectively), but that the paragraphs that were finally ratified were also not as relevant as the ones chosen for the other two languages. As a matter of fact:

the UK generally opted for the strongest obligations in respect of Welsh, and the weakest obligations with respect to Irish in Northern Ireland, with Gaelic in Scotland falling somewhere in between (Dunbar, 2003: 45).

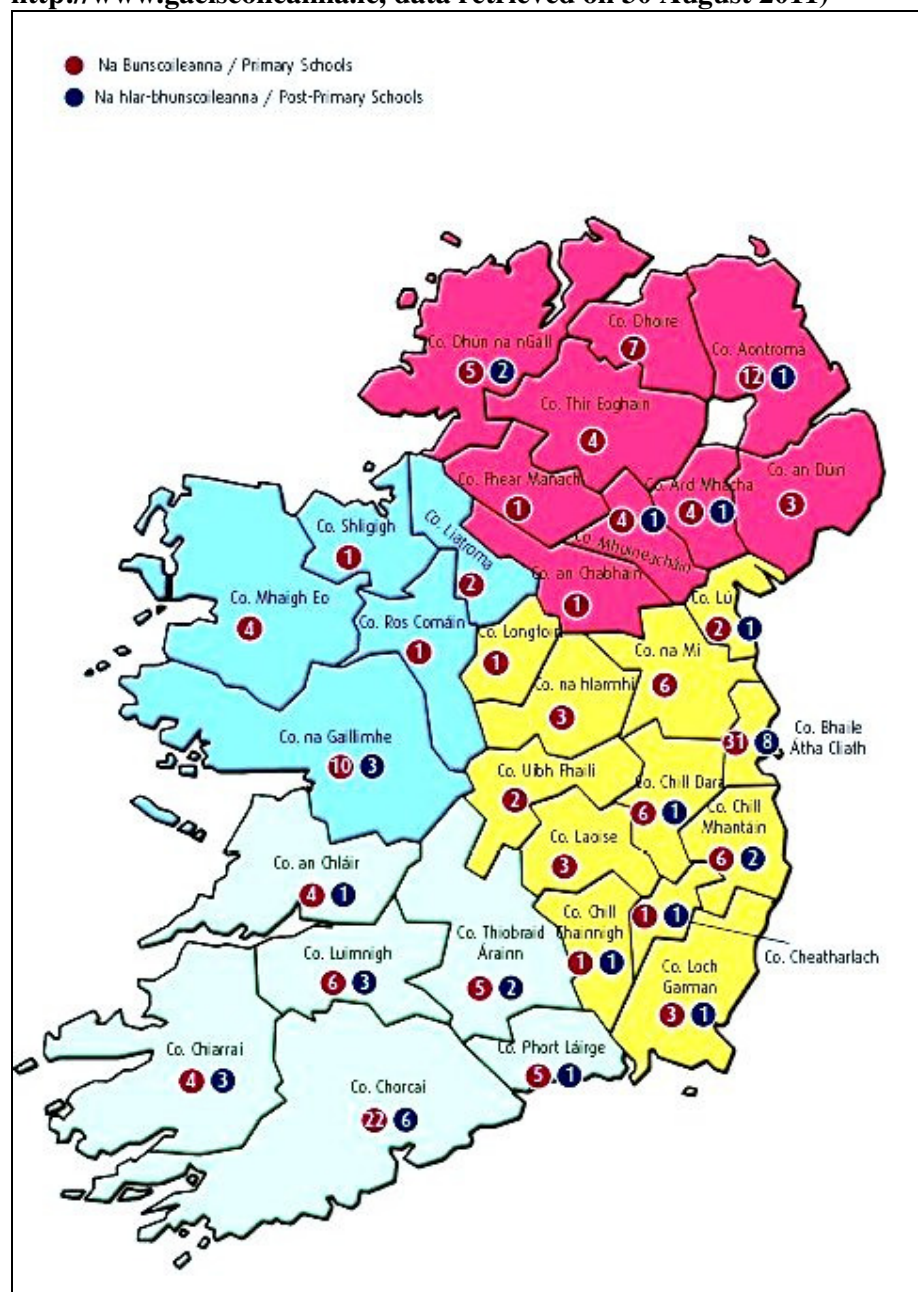
1.5.1 Recent developments of the Irish language revival in Northern Ireland

One of the most significant developments regarding the commitment and dedication of the people involved in the revival of Irish in Northern Ireland is the creation in the 1960s of a small Irish-speaking community, *Pobal Feirste*, in Belfast by a group of parents (second language learners of Irish), who decided to raise and educate their children in the language. In order to do so, they set up an Irish-medium primary school. As illustrated in table 1.2 and figure 1.7, their example triggered a series of developments, which became particularly significant in the field of education, as Irish-medium schools were and are now being set up all over Northern Ireland.

Table 1.3: Irish-medium school distribution in Northern Ireland (adapted from <http://www.gael scoileanna.ie>, data retrieved on 30 August 2011)

<i>County</i>	Primary schools	Post-primary schools
Antrim	12	1
Armagh	4	1
Derry	7	-
Down	3	-
Fermanagh	1	-
Tyrone	4	-
Total	31	2

Figure 1.7: Irish-medium schools outside the Gaeltacht 2009/2010 (adapted from <http://www.gael scoileanna.ie>, data retrieved on 30 August 2011)



In 1999, following the recommendations included in the Good Friday Agreement, an all-state organisation, *Foras na Gaeilge*, was set up in order to promote and encourage the use of spoken and written Irish at public and private level in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. Its main activities range from the funding of Irish language organizations and activities to the publication of Irish language and Irish-interest books and the support of Irish language education.

1.6 Irish in the European context

When the Republic of Ireland became an EEC member state in 1973, the Irish Government did not apply for and, thus, did not obtain a full working status for Irish. Despite being one of the two official national languages of the Republic, as enshrined by the Constitution, the Irish language was, therefore, defined as a treaty language only. This situation however was reversed as and from January 1, 2007, when the Irish language became one of the twenty one European Union official languages. Interestingly, although I noted above that the UK Government has been wanting in certain respects regarding their treatment of Irish in Northern Ireland within the European Charter for Minority and Regional Languages, the Irish Government has not ratified the European Charter yet. According to Nic Craith (1999) the current state of affairs, which characterises the position of Irish in the European context as supported by the Irish Government, is due to the fact that Irish is viewed as a national and not a regional language.

As Tovey *et al.* clearly state:

Irish is a working language in the European Court of Justice and is also included in the Community's LINGUA language teaching programme. The European Parliament has adopted important resolutions in favour of lesser-used (regional and minority) languages, while the EC budget includes a provision for measures to support these languages (1989: iv).

Moreover, the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages¹⁷ (an independent organisation representing those European Union citizens who are speakers of an autochthonous language other than the official language of their State) has its head-office in Dublin.

The situation of the Irish language in the UK in this regard is different. On 27th March 2001, the United Kingdom ratified the European Charter for Minority or Regional Languages, which came into effect on 1st July 2001. With regard to the Irish

¹⁷ The European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages was ended in 2010.

language, the United Kingdom Government selected a total of 36 paragraphs, 30 of which are related to matters that are the responsibility of the devolved administration in Northern Ireland and six paragraphs relating to those that are the responsibility of the UK government in Northern Ireland. The choice of these paragraphs influences more or less the same areas addressed by the Good Friday Agreement, i.e. education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, the media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transfrontier exchanges.

When comparing the situation of Irish in Éire with the situation of Irish in Northern Ireland the most striking difference to emerge, according to Ó Riagáin (2001: 211), is represented by the fact that “the Irish language is very much part of the nationalist programme in Northern Ireland, while the Republic has already moved into a post-nationalist phase”. Mac Póilin (1997: 185) emphasizes the fact that:

involvement in and support for the language movement in pre-independence Ireland was often based on an impulse to resist the forces of the British state. With independence, this motive disappeared in southern Ireland. [...] In the south, the promotion of Irish as a focus of nationalist resistance is now largely seen as irrelevant.

The revival attempt carried out by the Irish Government is often presented as an example of an unsuccessful attempt to reverse a language shift situation (Lee, 1989; Fennell, 1990, Fishman, 2001). So why did Irish succumb so rapidly to the process of Anglicisation imposed by its closest neighbour, when many other languages in more adverse situations have managed to survive? When compared to the context and history of other small or lesser-used European languages it emerges that Irish, incidentally, was spoken by as many, if not more, people in the early nineteenth century as those who spoke a number of languages such as Flemish, Dutch (or Dutch and Flemish combined), Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Basque, or Welsh (Lee, 1989: 664). The rapid growth in the size of these peoples, combined with the rapid fall in the Irish population since the famine, has led to a quite different population ratio today than that prevailing 150 years ago. Irish was not a particularly minor language by European criteria in the early nineteenth century (Lee, 1989: 664). With regard to the failed revival efforts in the Republic and the successful revival efforts in Northern Ireland, Crowley (2000: 6-7) states that “the greatest irony, however is that the major upsurge of interest in the language, both institutional and personal, has taken place outside the Republic of Ireland and without the support of the Irish state”.

1.7 Irish today

Over the centuries, and particularly since the historical and political events that took place in the 16th and 17th centuries, many factors contributed to the decline in the use of the Irish language. The shift towards English was caused by internal and external factors of various kinds (Corrigan, 1992) more specifically, by a series of complex economic, historical, psychological, and political factors that throughout the centuries often interacted in hastening the decline of the Irish language.

Many of the forces that caused the catastrophic drop in the number of Irish speakers from the middle of the 19th century onwards still continue to operate in the Gaeltacht areas today. More recently, a whole host of new factors capable of undermining the position of the Irish language have come on to the scene (Ó Huallacháin, 1991: 123) and have begun to exert their influence.

The current Irish language situation in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland can be credited to a number of factors, which, according to the model designed to provide a measure of the vitality and status of a minority or endangered language proposed by Giles *et al.* (1977), fall into three main categories: i) demographic factors (birth and mortality rates, immigration and emigration, mixed marriages, etc), ii) institutional support and control factors (government support in terms of policies, national and local services, education, broadcast and printed media, culture, religion, etc), and iii) status factors (historical, socio-economic and language status). One of the weaknesses of Giles *et al.*'s ethnolinguistic vitality model is that it does not provide any grading of importance of the categories and of the factors comprising each category so that it is not possible to refer to a priority list of the most important factors that must be present and active in order to assess the vitality and health of any endangered or minority language situation. The model has also been criticised because despite the complex and multidimensional relationship between language and identity, Giles *et al.* do not include a large number of sociopolitical, socioeconomic and sociocultural factors (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003).

While status factors such as the past and present national and international language policies implemented in Éire and the UK, and the social, historical and economic status of Irish have already been discussed in detail in the sections above (§1.2.2 and following), the following sections will provide an account of the impact of demographic, institutional support and control factors in both countries.

1.8 The Vitality of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland

1.8.1 The influence of demographic factors

On the basis of the answers given to the language question¹⁸ contained in the Irish Republic 2002 Census of Population, 1,570,894 million persons (41.9% of the total population) reported themselves as being able to speak Irish. However, a more realistic percentage of actual speakers of the language can be easily scaled down to a percentage falling between 5% and 1% of the total population. The two ends of the spectrum are represented by the ‘overoptimistics’, i.e. those who report high percentages and numbers of Irish speakers both inside and outside the Gaeltacht, and the overpessimistics or, as Cronin (2005) defines them, the ‘Cassandras’ who report very low figures related to the use of Irish with a daily frequency. In both cases, paradoxically most of them rely on Census data to support their estimates. The main differences at the basis of such divergent estimates lies in the fact that they do not include in their calculations the same “kind” of speakers, i.e. while some of them only take into account native speakers who use Irish on a daily basis, others take into consideration a wider definition of Irish speaker.

In the first group we can include Census data, but also Ó Néill who, for instance, estimates a total of “414,000 functional, fluent and semi-fluent speakers in the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland” (2005: 279).

The second group comprises authors such as Hindley (1990) who states that Irish language speakers in the Gaeltacht may be as few as 10,000 or Ó hEallaithe (2004) who talks about a total of 72,834 people who claim to speak Irish on a daily basis of which only 21,000 live in the Gaeltacht.

According to the 2002 Census, the highest proportion of these self-reported speakers of Irish are represented by the school-age population (i.e. the 10 to 14 and 15 to 19 age clusters). This proportion then declines to rise again in the 25-39 age group. It increases again with the 45-54 year category. After that, ability decreases steadily with

¹⁸ In 1996 the language question in the Census was changed and a new question on the ability and frequency of use of the Irish language introduced. “The new version of the question marked a major departure from the version used in previous Censuses. The version used in those years asked respondents to designate themselves as “Write Irish only”, “Write Irish and English”, “Read but cannot speak Irish” or to leave blank as appropriate. While the revised version used in 1996 is more direct, “Can the person speak Irish?”, and also includes a question on frequency of speaking Irish, a major drawback is that it gives rise to a discontinuity with the results of previous Censuses. The version introduced in 1996 was retained unchanged for 2002” (Government of Ireland, 2004: 75).

increasing age. The number of persons reporting a daily use of Irish is much lower. Again, daily use of Irish is higher among the school-going population and reaches its peak in the 14-19 age group. It then declines quite sharply with increasing age.

The highest proportion of persons reported in the most recent census for which figures are available as able to speak Irish, live in Galway County (52.7%), while the counties with the lowest percentages of Irish speakers were Louth (36.3%) and Wexford (37.4%).

Demographic changes (e.g. immigration, exogenous marriages, and so on) were gradually introduced as the Gaeltacht became less and less isolated and the impact of socio-economic factors began to exert their influence (Akutagawa, 1986; Edwards, 1985; Hindley, 1990; Ó Riagáin, 1991).

In order to curb the strong emigration from Irish-speaking areas (a phenomenon that for many centuries contributed to the rapid depopulation of these poorer districts) state intervention and support began to be aimed at industrialising and modernising Irish-speaking areas. The effects of this action did bring about the improvement of living standards, employment, and infrastructures (Ó Riagáin, 1992: 27), but they also paved the way for new Anglicising factors and the ‘Gaeltacht paradox’, which Ó Sé (2000: 68-72) defines as “urban influences”, including, for instance, a new wave of English-speaking returned emigrants and immigrants attracted to the Gaeltacht because of its improved employment opportunities (Akutagawa, 1986; Commins, 1988; Ó Riagáin, 1992: 27-35). They undoubtedly contributed to the dilution of Irish-speaking communities in the Gaeltacht, intensified mobility, and their children introduced English into the formerly Irish-medium school playground (Mercator, 2001: 10-11). Moreover, while until thirty years ago very few people married ‘into the Gaeltacht’, nowadays the number of mixed households has increased with notable effects on the transmission of the language from parents to children. Indeed, as Ó Riagáin (1992: 35) states with regard to the Irish language situation in *Corca Dhiubhne* “although immigrants and internal migrants form relatively small proportions of the total sample, they form a larger proportion of married respondents”.

Another factor worthy of consideration is the fact that the language landscape in Ireland has been changing drastically over the last two decades with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of immigrants and foreign nationals from a host of countries who brought with themselves their own languages.

The rapid economic and population changes experienced since the mid-1990s, which transformed Ireland into the ‘Celtic Tiger’, resulted also in a substantial increase

of immigrants (over ten percent of the total population according to the 2006 Census) from 188 different countries (CSO, 2008).¹⁹

As Cronin aptly pointed out:

Irish is no longer locked into an exclusive relationship with English. There are now, for example, sizeable minorities of Russian, Chinese, Arabic and Romanian speakers in Ireland. The situation of Irish is certain to alter as a result of a changing linguistic context (2005: 49).

1.8.2 The influence of institutional support and control factors

Until 1973, when a *Fine Gael* government decided to discard this requirement, a knowledge of Irish was compulsory for civil-service entry, police, army, and obtaining the school leaving certificate. Irish was given a central place in the primary school curriculum, and it was made an obligatory subject in the secondary school curriculum where it already had a strong position since in 1913 it had become a requirement for matriculation to the National Universities of Ireland, which is retained to this day (<http://www.nui.ie/college/entry-requirements.asp>, accessed 30 August 2011).

Before the enactment in 2003 of the ‘Official Languages Act’, bilingualism in the public sector was not guaranteed.²⁰ Indeed, as *Coimisiún na Gaeltachta* pointed out “there has never been any understanding within the public sector that citizens have language rights or that the language rights of citizens who choose Irish as their first language should be recognized” (2002: 18). This point was made in 2002 by Mac Donnacha too who, when referring to the rights of Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht, remarked that “one of the most controversial and unresolved issues in Irish language planning for many decades has been the inability of public sector organisation to deliver their services through the medium of the Irish language”²¹. Therefore, the importance of this legislation lies precisely in the fact that for the first time it ensures “a statutory

¹⁹ It is worth noting however, that the economic decline caused by the recent global economic recession has caused a substantial fall in the number of immigrants moving to Ireland (Darmody *et al.*, 2011).

²⁰ *Bord na Gaeilge*, the state body that until 1999 was responsible for the promotion of Irish, also dealt with complaints related to lack of services in Irish. Approximately fifty complaints were made to *Bord na Gaeilge* every year regarding lack of service in Irish from the public sector. The complaints related to service through personal contact, telephone contact, written correspondence and to the visibility of Irish in signs, advertising and in printed material. Complaints were made against Government Departments, State Companies, Local Authorities, Health Boards and State Offices (*Bord na Gaeilge*, 1997).

²¹ <http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller4/MacDonnacha.html> (last accessed: 30 August 2011)

framework for the delivery of public services through the Irish Language” according to demand (An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta, 2003: 1). The main areas covered by the Act deal with the provision of services through the medium of Irish in official correspondence, documents and publications, as well as in the courts.²²

The educational system was one of the main agents that, with the establishment of the Irish Free State, the Government decided to entrust with the task and the responsibility of maintaining Irish language use in the Gaeltacht and restoring its use in the rest of the country. As Ó Laoire points out:

[i]t was firmly believed that the language could be revived and revitalized by an effective system of teaching the language. Inherent in the policy of promoting the language in the school was an implicit understanding that as the schools were perceived as the main agents in effecting a language shift to English, the process could be reversed in favour of Irish (1995: 230).

Nowadays, Irish-medium schools represent a fundamental orientation towards Irish language use and the socialisation of children in that language (Mercator, 2001). Indeed, the present “[d]evelopment and expansion of the language could be described in terms of secondary bilingualism and is attributable in most cases to the promotion of the language in and through the educational system” (Ó Laoire, 1995: 223).

The fact that the number of Irish-medium schools is growing not only in the Gaeltacht, but also in the rest of Ireland, and, in particular, in Northern Ireland, and that an increasing number of parents decide to send their children to an all-Irish-speaking school, means that more and more young people will have at least a fairly good functional knowledge of the language (see figure 1.5 below).

There are currently 213 Irish-medium schools (173 at primary level and 40 at post-primary level in the 32 counties, outside the Gaeltacht) with an intake that exceeds 39,462 pupils.

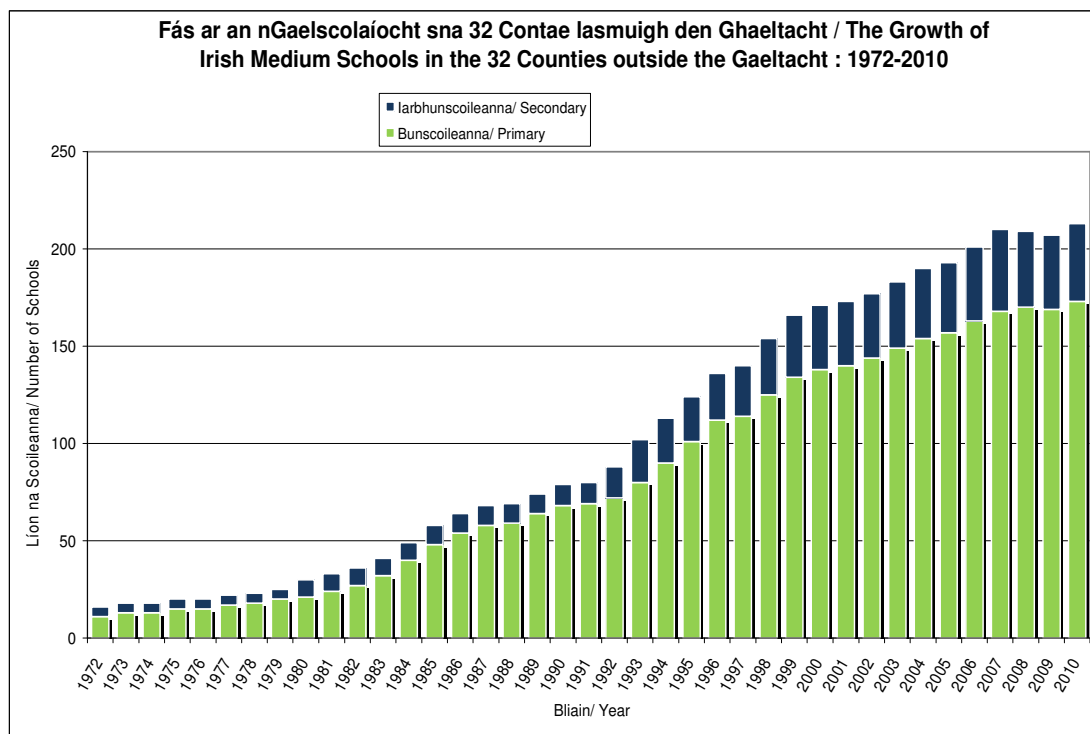
Pre-school education is a significant phenomenon in all 32 counties and consists mainly of Irish-medium playgrounds.

The latest available data on the growth of the number of Irish-medium schools in Ireland (primary and post-primary) are clearly indicative of the magnitude of this trend.

²² According to the information available on the Irish Law Society website, “Pursuant to Section 40(3) of the Solicitors’ Act 1954 (as amended) no person to whom the Act applies shall be admitted as a Solicitor unless he has obtained from the Law Society a certificate of having passed a Second Examination in Irish within two years before the expiration of the term of apprenticeship or within two years before admission as a solicitor” (<http://www.lawsociety.ie>, retrieved 14 December 2006).

The graph in figure 1.8 shows the marked and constant expansion of Irish-medium education in the Republic of Ireland outside the Gaeltacht between 1972 and 2006.²³

Figure 1.8: The Growth of Irish Medium Schools in the 32 Counties outside the Gaeltacht : 1972-2010 (from <http://www.gael scoileanna.ie>, retrieved on 30 August 2011).



In the Gaeltacht, first and second level education is carried out entirely through the medium of Irish. According to the data provided by the Mercator dossier on Irish language education in Éire (Mercator, 2001), in 1999-2000 there were 130 schools (110 at primary and 20 at post-primary level) attended by 14,926 pupils.

In third level education in the Republic of Ireland, the teaching of Irish is catered for by all four National Universities of Ireland as well as Trinity College, the University of Limerick and Dublin City University (DCU).

At third level it is possible to choose among a range of courses (in arts, information technology, business, science and so on) that are taught through the

²³ The situation created in education by State language policies in the 1960s compelled a number of parents to organise themselves in a voluntary movement leading to the establishment in 1973 of two organisations involved in the promotion of Irish medium education at pre-school (*Naíonraí Gaelacha*) and also at primary and post-primary level (*Gael scoileanna*) (Mercator, 2001: 11).

medium of Irish; Irish-based courses in which Irish is the main element; or to study Irish as a subject in its own right.

1.8.3 Irish in the Media

In the last few decades, as many authors have pointed out (e.g. Ó Connell, 2000, 2004; Ó hIfearnáin, 2000; Ó Sé, 2000), another cause of shift towards English has been added to the already extant list of causes: the influence of the media. As regards the presence of Irish in the media it is important to note that the pervasive influence of English-medium television is widely agreed to be one of the major Anglicising factors in Irish-speaking areas. Nonetheless, this influence need not be exclusively negative. As McCloskey (2006) argues, the creation of Irish language broadcast media (radio and television) has done much to repair the damage done in terms of the fragmentation of all the different dialects spoken in the Gaeltacht following the shift to English.

In the Republic of Ireland, two national channels *RTÉ* and Network 2, broadcast programmes in Irish. *Teilifís na Gaeilge* is an all-Irish television channel which broadcasts a wide range of high-quality programmes: news, sport, a daily drama series, music and light entertainment. It also offers a subtitling service in English. It opened in 1996 with the objective of providing a national television service in the Irish language and access to the Irish language and culture. In the autumn of 1999 it was renamed TG4. It broadcasts an average of seven hours of Irish language programmes which are sustained by a wide range of programming in other languages. Where possible, programmes are subtitled in English in order to be able to reach the 41.9% of the Irish population who, according to the 2002 Census, have some ability in Irish, and also to enable people with a limited fluency in Irish to improve their understanding.

With regard to radio broadcasting, *Raidió na Gaeltachta* is a radio station established in 1972 that provides a 24 hour daily broadcasting service exclusively through the medium of Irish (it also live-streams on the Internet). *RTÉ Radio 1* and *2FM* broadcast a variety of programmes in Irish, while *Raidió na Life*, an Irish language community station, broadcasts its programmes from Dublin. A number of community stations, moreover, include programmes in Irish as part of their schedules. An average of 5 short films and a number of documentaries in the Irish language are produced each year (Louise Ryan, p.c.).

In general terms, the use of the three dialects and of the standard variety in both the broadcast and the printed media varies according to the medium involved. While *Raidió na Gaeltachta* broadcasts in all three dialectal varieties, other radios tend to use

the standard variety which is also the main variety used in television. With regard to the printed media, all varieties are used. Nonetheless, an in-depth analysis of the use of Irish dialects and of the standard in the media reveals that we are witness to a potential case of blatant schizophrenia. With the exception of children's programming there appears to be no official and formal policy with regard to the use of Irish in both the broadcast and printed media (O'Connell, 2000). Moreover, the incredibly scant literature on audience reception and perception of Irish language programmes makes any discussion of their quality, style and genre speculative and tentative (Day, 2000). As Ó hIfearnáin remarks:

There is no doubt that establishing such a standard, *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*, was absolutely necessary for national planning. The psychological effect on the Gaeltacht population of using only the standard in school books and on official business to the exclusion of local dialect forms was arguably less positive, and has been a continuous problem with which national Irish language broadcasters have had to grapple as they balance the need for local and national relevance (2000: 101).

Furthermore, when any discussion focuses on the broadcast media, attention is generally devoted to minority television broadcasting (in particular TG4), while less attention is paid to minority language radio broadcasting even though "the physical amount of hours of [radio] programming in the Irish language is [...] greater in aggregate than that of Irish television" (Day, 2000: 160). In addition, debates on minority language screen translation tend to focus more on the type and mode of translation to employ (dubbing vs. subtitling) rather than the kind of viewer (and in this case, the kind of speaker) that should be catered for by this service, since, as Ó Connell points out:

contrary to the perception of many broadcasters and viewers, the decision to adopt one approach to language transfer rather than another has the potential to have profound implications for a future of a minority language (1998: 68–69).

Indeed, not all modes of language transfer for the screen, and more specifically dubbing and subtitling, are suited for all audiences. While one mode may cater better for the needs and the requirements of one audience (e.g. native speakers), it may also alienate other potential viewers/speakers (e.g. second language learners) (O'Connell, 2000).

1.9 The vitality of the Irish language in Northern Ireland

Before the ratification of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and of the European Charter for Minority and Regional Languages in 2001, the situation of the

Irish language in the UK was undoubtedly very weak on all fronts (Northover and Donnelly, 1996).

Now, however, the situation of the Irish language in Northern Ireland has improved with regard to many of the demographic, institutional and status factors thought to be relevant to language shift. Nonetheless, as detailed in the paragraphs below, a comparison between the support given to Scots Gaelic or Welsh and Irish shows that the latter does not yet enjoy the same status as the former two languages.

1.9.1 The demographic situation

While 10.35% (167,490 people) of the Northern Irish population of 1,617,597 aged three and over reported having some knowledge of the Irish language, the data gathered by the 2001 Northern Ireland Census²⁴ also show that only 4.64% declared full fluency and competence in writing, speaking and reading in Irish. Moreover, a survey carried out in 1987 showed that 6% of the Northern Ireland population claimed full fluency, “while 84% claimed to never use Irish at home, 15% used it occasionally, and only 1% claimed to use it on a daily basis” (<http://www.eurolang.net/State/uk.htm#Irish>, accessed 15 September 2007). The Census question related to knowledge of Irish provided four possible pre-coded answers which could be chosen in any given combination. This means that the results were then arranged in 5 categories (i.e. 1. Understands spoken Irish but cannot read, write or speak Irish; 2. Speaks but does not read or write Irish; 3. Speaks and reads but does not write Irish; 4. Speaks, reads, writes and understands Irish; 5. Other combinations of skills) also summarized in the ‘Has some knowledge of Irish’ category.

The proportion of people who reported some knowledge of Irish increases markedly with the 12-15 age group and reaches a peak with the 25 to 39 age group. It then decreases slightly for the 40-59 age cluster and declines sharply with increasing age.

154,622 of the self-reported Irish speakers in the Northern Ireland census are Catholic, 10,987 are of Protestant or other Christian faiths, and 415 belong to other religions and philosophies.

²⁴ The language question in the Northern Ireland census of population asked the respondents to report their general understanding and ability to read, write and speak Irish in various combinations. However, since these data do not refer to native Irish speakers and the Census question did not objectively assess the level of knowledge of the language, they are mainly indicative of a general support for the language rather than an objective indicator of actual numbers.

The current Irish language situation in Northern Ireland is characterised, on the one hand, by the fact that the great majority of these self-reported speakers are second language learners and on the other by the fact that it is an urban phenomenon centred mainly in (West) Belfast, Derry and a few other districts (Mercator 2004: 2).

1.9.2 Institutional support and control factors

The state's hostility was evident in all public sectors, particularly between 1921 and 1972 when the Ulster Unionist Party was in power (Ó Murchú and Ó Murchú, 1999), "Irish was not heard on radio or later on television. It was not used politically, nor was it encouraged or recognised by the authorities" (Ó Breasláin and Dwyer, 1995: 28). However, this overwhelmingly hostile attitude towards the Irish language not only reinforced the commitment and involvement of Irish language supporters, but it also had another important consequence: the politicisation of the language and its identification with Catholic nationalism.

One of the defining moments for the Irish language movement in Northern Ireland was represented by the developments that took place in Belfast in the 1950s and 1960s which resulted in the establishment in 1969 of the first urban Irish language community (Maguire, 1986, 1990; Mac Póilin, 1997, 1999). *Pobal Feirste* was the name chosen for this group and it now consists of 16 families representing "the largest concentration of Irish-speaking families outside the Gaeltacht" (Mac Póilin, 1997: 184). A dozen Irish-speaking couples set up a co-operative, bought a piece of land in West Belfast (Shaw's Road) and built their own homes. When their children reached school age, they also started an Irish-medium primary school, *Bunscoil Phobal Feirste*, "the school opened in 1971 with 9 pupils, without state funding and in the face of considerable opposition from the educational authorities" (Pobal, 2002). The British government granted funding only in 1984. However, other parents and organizations followed the example of the commitment set by the parents in Shaw's Road. "The development of Irish-medium education has been central to the growth of the Irish language community in the north of Ireland. This has been accompanied by the expansion of Irish language initiatives in the cultural, social and economic spheres" (Pobal, 2002) despite the total lack of response (verging on opposition) displayed until very recently by the British government (Ó Breasláin and Dwyer, 1995).

1.9.3 Irish in institutional settings and in education

Until the ratification of the European Charter for Minority Languages and the Good Friday Agreement, the use of Irish in the Courts of Law or in any other public and institutional context was not allowed. Education was the only institutional context in which the use of the Irish language was allowed (but for many decades only as a subject in Catholic schools).

In Northern Ireland, pre-school provision is entirely voluntary and is provided by 38 nursery schools. In the Republic of Ireland, the pre-school sector (children in the 3 to 4 age range) is mainly based on the work carried out by *Na Naíonraí Gaelacha* which aims primarily at setting up playgrounds for pre-schoolers.

The data concerning Irish-medium education in Northern Ireland show that the growth in immersion education in the Republic of Ireland, is paralleled in the six counties by the steadfast increase recorded since the setting up of the first primary school, *Bunscoil Phobal Feirste*, established in Belfast in 1971 (Mercator, 2004).

Irish in third level education is taught as a subject at Queen's University, Belfast and at the University of Ulster.

1.9.4 Irish in the broadcast media

In Northern Ireland, before the ratification of the Good Friday Agreement, broadcasting on television and radio of programmes in Irish was quite limited and unsatisfactory. As Mac Póilin reports (1997: 29), in 1996 the total yearly output broadcast by BBC Northern Ireland amounted to 26 hours, but with only 4 hours of programmes directed at an audience with a fairly good knowledge of Irish (the remaining 22 hours being programmes directed at language learners). Two years later, Anderson (1999: 7) reported that approximately 10 hours per year of television in Irish at that time were broadcast by BBC Northern Ireland. As for radio programmes, 4.5 hours per week were dedicated to radio programmes in Irish. Compared to Welsh and Scottish Gaelic this provision for Irish language programming is blatantly poor. As Dunbar reports, in 2003, *Radio Cymru*, BBC's all-Welsh radio service, broadcasted an average of 120 weekly hours, while S4C (*Sianel Pedwar Cymru*, the Welsh Fourth Channel) currently broadcasts 30 hours of programmes in Welsh per week (2003: 23). With regard to Scottish Gaelic, the situation is much grimmer, nonetheless it is certainly more positive than the situation of Irish-language broadcasting in Northern Ireland. In 2002-2003 BBC *Radio na nGaidheal* offered 63 hours per week of programmes in Gaelic, while BBC Two, and the private channels Grampian Television, Scottish

Television and Channel 4 broadcast a total of 250 hours of “original Gaelic-medium television programming” (Dunbar, 2003: 30).

In 2004, the UK Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced the establishment of ‘The Irish Language Broadcasting Fund’ (ILBF)²⁵ for increased financial support of Irish language film and television production in Northern Ireland which will provide the region’s Irish language audience with quality television productions. It is hoped that the ILBF will redress this situation thus facilitating the BBC in making additional programmes in Irish for local audiences. It is important to note that the key criteria that ILBF will take into consideration when allocating resources are that “the product will, once produced, reach a substantial audience in Northern Ireland”; that at least 60% of the dialogues are in Irish; and that the product will be subtitled in English in order to make the Irish language more accessible to a generalist audience. Moreover, the UK government will undertake to ensure a more widespread availability of the TG4 signal throughout Northern Ireland.²⁶

Likewise, the number of hours and quality of programmes in Irish have not increased noticeably with regard to radio broadcasting. The broadcasting of Irish language television programmes is still limited to a few hours per week. The 15-minute weekly programme in Irish that was broadcast in 1981 on BBC Radio Ulster has now increased to 4.5 weekly hours of Irish language programmes, while Radio Foyle broadcasts an average of 3.5 hours of programmes in Irish. In 2006, Raidió Fáilte, an Irish language community radio station, started broadcasting from *An Chultúrlann*, in Belfast.

1.9.5 Irish in the printed media and the web in the North and the South

With regard to the printed media both in the North and South, an average of 100 books in Irish are published in Ireland every year. They comprise a wide range of *genres* (e.g. light fiction, poetry, prose and educational books) and they cater for children, teenagers and adults. They rarely exceed 1,000 copies per title (Conchur Ó Giollagain, p.c.) and those that sell most are academic books and textbooks. Many of

²⁵ This fund was set up with the aim of developing an independent Irish language production sector in Northern Ireland and of providing both Irish language speakers and learners with a range of quality television productions (<http://www.rte.ie/tv/ipu/>).

²⁶ As reported on TG4’s web site (<http://www.tg4.ie/Bearla/ni.htm>, information retrieved on 30 August 2011) reception of the channel’s broadcasting in Northern Ireland is available through analogue aerial (from the RTÉ transmitters and also, in the Belfast area, from a local site on Divis); satellite (on Sky, channel 177); and cable (on channel 877 on ntl: Belfast).

these books are published thanks to state subsidies through organizations such as *Bord na Leabhair Gaeilge*²⁷ ('The Irish Language Books Board').

Many all-Irish language periodicals and newspapers are published through state support too. The ones that have a wider readership are: *Foinse* a weekly newspaper available nationwide; *Lá*, a Belfast-based daily newspaper; *Comhar* and *Feasta* two monthly magazines and *Mahogany Gaspipe*, a teenage magazine. English language newspapers (e.g. *The Irish Times* and *The Irish News*) and a number of local papers also regularly contain articles in Irish.

Generally speaking, perhaps the greatest developments and advancements with regard to communication through the Irish language have been recorded over the past decade with the extraordinary spread of the use of the Web and the Internet. There are a host of Irish-English bilingual and Irish monolingual websites on the most varied aspects of the Irish language and culture. They range from sites devoted to online Irish language teaching, to the sites of public and voluntary organizations involved in the promotion of the language and the support of a wide range of initiatives, as well as newsletters, blogs, and discussion forums.²⁸

1.10 The urban phenomenon

Finally, there is a relatively new phenomenon that is worth mentioning for its potential implications and impact on the revival and strengthening of the Irish language in towns and cities. It is what has been defined as the new Gaeltacht areas in the *Galltacht*²⁹ (Hindley: 1990), or 'second language communities' (McCloskey, 2006),

²⁷ *Bord na Leabhair Gaeilge* promotes the publishing of books in Irish for both teenagers and younger children by private publishers. *An Gúm* and *Comhar na Múinteoirí Gaeilge* ('Council of Teachers of Irish') integrate this production by publishing, respectively, children's books and educational material in book and other formats.

²⁸ Examples of sites devoted to online Irish language teaching are www.gaeltalk.net, www.daltai.com/home.htm, www.maths.tcd.ie/gaeilge/gaelic.html. www.udaras.ie and www.forasnagaeilge.ie are, respectively, the web sites of two organizations involved in the promotion of the language: *Údarás na Gaeltachta* the body responsible for the preservation and strengthening of the Irish language and the Gaeltacht and *Foras Na Gaeilge* the organization responsible for promoting the Irish language in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/~smacsuib/eolai/, is a science newsletter for post-primary students with scientific articles translated into Irish, while <http://www.daltai.com/discus/messages/board-topics.html> is an example of a discussion forum.

²⁹ English-speaking areas.

that is, a number of social networks made up of “a large, disparate, well educated, and mostly middle class community” that grew out and around the Irish language play-groups (*Naíonraí*) and Irish-medium schools (*Gaelscoileanna*) they sent and are sending their children to. These individuals “have attained strong second language ability in Irish [and] use Irish consistently in their daily routines, listen to Irish language broadcasts, watch Irish language TV, buy, read, and write books in Irish” (McCloskey, 2006: 13).

Despite different attitudes and opinions related to the success, or lack of it, both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, these social networks are a reality that should not be dispensed with or be frowned upon too easily and they certainly deserve more attention from a research perspective. This is particularly relevant for the implications these initiatives may have for the development of the Irish language and its expansion and diffusion particularly among the communities that have grown up around Irish-medium schools in urban centres (Maguire, 1990; McCloskey, 2001).

1.11 Conclusion

After centuries of massive shift towards English, Irish language use has contracted not only in terms of number of speakers, but also in the areas of life and the range of activities conducted through it, thus becoming a language in danger of extinction. Yet, despite all verdicts regarding its imminent death, the Irish language has remained alive in the Republic of Ireland and is experiencing an unprecedented revival in Northern Ireland. Therefore, despite all the people who, over the past century, have prophesied the demise of the language within a generation and despite the fact that Irish is a language struggling to survive exactly in those areas where it is still spoken as the everyday language, Irish is still alive and, above all, it is showing interesting and vibrant signs of revival in areas and domains where it had disappeared centuries ago. The increase in the number of Irish-medium schools set up outside the Gaeltacht, the events and initiatives organised in support of the language, the increased presence of Irish in the media, especially on the Web, are all evidence of the strong interest and enthusiasm in studying, speaking and using the language in as many contexts and situations as possible. This situation can also be ascribed to the new wave of second language learning and the enthusiastic efforts of language revivalists both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland. As McCloskey points out:

the effort to maintain Irish emerges as one of the more successful efforts so far in the business of language-revival. It is in fact the single most successful instance of language revival or maintenance known to me (the

very strange and complex case of Hebrew set aside for the moment). What is un-paralleled in the Irish situation is not what has happened in Gaeltacht communities, but rather the creation of a large, active, creative and energetic second language community, a community now many times larger than the traditional Gaeltacht (2004: 10-11).

Unfortunately, this vibrant revival outside the Gaeltacht is not paralleled by the same level of commitment to the language by Irish language speakers within the Gaeltacht. As shown by a study of the current situation of Gaeltacht schools (Ó Giollagáin *et al.*, 2004) and by the ongoing debate on the media (*The Independent*, 16th July 2007), the use of the Irish language in Gaeltacht areas is still subject to an inexorable and constant shrinking in the number of people willing to use it as their everyday language.

Over the past thirty years, various studies on a number of aspects and issues of the sociolinguistics of Irish have uncovered the dynamics of Irish language use in various contexts and situations, as well as the general attitudes towards the language both inside and outside the Gaeltacht. By contrast, other aspects of the vitality of this language, such as attitudes towards the different dialects spoken in Gaeltacht areas vis à vis the standard variety, contrastive analyses between the Irish language situation obtaining in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland have received little attention.

Most studies undertaken in the Gaeltacht (e.g. Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1984; Ó Riagáin, 1992) represent the updating of the extensive body of sociolinguistic research carried out in the early 1970s and referred to earlier as CILAR (1975). The importance of this study resides in the fact that it represents the first example of a sociolinguistic research programme carried out in Ireland and the Gaeltacht through the medium of a questionnaire in order to study attitudes towards the Irish language. However, this study neither developed a sociological analysis of language shift nor investigated the socio-economic aspects of decline.

The main objective of this PhD project by comparison is to bridge these lacunae by providing an in-depth analysis of the situation of the Irish language in two of the main Gaeltacht areas (South Connemara and Donegal) and of the main attitudes towards the Irish language with regard to its use in a number of contexts and situations by Irish language speakers, and to compare it to the situation obtaining in Northern Ireland.

The present research project was based on the hypothesis that, although in serious and constant danger of disappearing, the Irish language is still used as an everyday language in the two Gaeltacht areas of interest to this study and that specific

demographic and economic variables play and, indeed, have always played a fundamental role in the preservation of the language to date.

In order to ascertain the validity of this hypothesis, the project was developed by implementing and using a multimethod approach which included conducting interviews and administering a questionnaire in two Gaeltacht areas in the Republic of Ireland, namely, the Donegal and the South Connemara Gaeltacht, as well as a small urban Irish-speaking community in West Belfast, Northern Ireland. Both the interviews and the questionnaire were designed in order to obtain an in-depth picture of Irish language use in a number of contexts and situations as well as of various attitudinal dimensions related to Irish language policies, Irish in education, Irish in the media, the future of the language and Irish as a symbol of ethnic or social identity.

Chapter 2. Language attitudes, revitalization and shift

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an historical and contemporary account of the status and vitality of the Irish language. This one will situate my research project within the relevant literature and theoretical frameworks that account for processes of language ‘maintenance’, ‘shift’, ‘death’ and ‘revitalization’ with respect to endangered languages. Since attitudinal disposition is a key element in the ethno linguistic vitality of any language, the chapter begins with an overview of attitude theory and then applies its constructs to my findings regarding Irish in this comparative study of the phenomenon. It will also illustrate the main methods employed in language attitude research globally though naturally there will be a specific focus on current and retrospective studies of the Irish situation. The second part of the chapter (from §2.4 to 2.5) will examine the concepts of maintenance, shift, death and revitalization, which are considered particularly relevant for the purposes of any research dealing with the impact of language attitudes on usage. Moreover, it will provide a critical overview of the Irish language attitudes surveys already undertaken.

2.2 Attitudes

This section will provide an overview of the literature on attitudes and language attitude. The first part will present and discuss theories and models adopted in the field of social psychology to study and analyse attitudes. The second part of this section will illustrate language attitudes theory and research and will focus specifically on Irish language attitude studies.

2.2.1 Nature and definition(s) of attitude

The study and understanding of attitudes has long been the focus in the field of social psychology (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Oskamp, 1991).

Originally the term ‘attitude’ was used to refer simply to a bodily posture (Oskamp, 1991; Baker, 1992), over the years, however, the concept has become a common term used by both scientists and lay persons alike to describe and explain many different aspects of human behaviour (Oskamp, 1991).

Attitudinal research can be categorised into the five main approaches outlined below with almost no overlap between the adherents of each perspective: 1. Descriptive (by studying, for instance, the views shared by a group of people on a specific topic); 2. Measurement (by creating and developing methods to measure attitudes, e.g. scales); 3. Polling (to assess attitudes shared by very large groups of people); 4. Theoretical (to explain the nature, development and mutability of attitudes); and 5. Experimental (experiments to investigate factors responsible for attitude change and test hypotheses) (Oskamp, 1991).

One of the main problems highlighted by the majority of social psychologists is the latent nature of attitudes and the fact that they are “inaccessible to direct observation” (Ajzen, 1989: 242). Therefore, measurable responses must be used in order to assess the favourable or unfavourable evaluations of the object of an attitude.

Attitudes have been defined from different theoretical perspectives, this situation has resulted in substantial semantic differences between usage of the concept as well as disagreement about the generality and specificity of the term with practically every researcher providing their own defining labels. As Rokeach remarks:

Despite the central position of attitudes in social psychology and personality, the concept has been plagued with a good deal of ambiguity. As the student pores over and ponders the many definitions of attitude to be found in the literature, he finds it difficult to grasp in precisely what ways they are conceptually similar to, or different from, one another. Even more important, it is difficult to assess what difference these variations in conceptual definitions make. Most of the definitions of attitude seem to be more or less interchangeable insofar as attitude measurement and hypothesis testing are concerned (1989: 110).

This terminological confusion is not only a problem within the field of social psychology but it is also reflected in other fields such as, for instance, anthropology, education, and sociology, with very little overlap across and between the different disciplines.

As early as 1935, in one of the earliest, most influential and often cited analysis of attitudes and associated research, Allport provided sixteen definitions of the concept. As Oskamp (1991) notes in this regard, Allport’s analysis incorporates four central features that underlie these definitions. The first one, readiness for response, is based on the fact that an attitude is not a behaviour as such but a predisposition or tendency (Ajzen, 1984; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993) “to respond in a particular way to the attitude object” (Oskamp, 1991: 7). Secondly, attitudes may motivate and guide behaviour (Fazio, 1986). Thirdly, the nature of attitudes is relatively enduring - meaning that they

tend to have a high degree of stability. The fourth feature, which is also one of the dimensions that has been increasingly researched over the past few years, is related to the evaluative aspect of attitudes (Oskamp, 1991). Hence, attitudes can be defined as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour” (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993: 1). This entity, the object of an attitude, can be a thing, a person or a group of people, an idea or a concept, an issue, a situation, or even a place.

One of the main causes of the confusion surrounding attitudinal definition is linked to the approach adopted by theorists and researchers which can be polarized into two views: the one-component versus three-component model (Oskamp, 1991; Zanna and Rempel, 1988). The following section will illustrate these two models of attitude, as well as their sub-components and related concepts, and will provide the operational definition adopted for the purposes of this study.

2.2.2 Attitude components

The bone of contention between the unitary and the multi-component view of attitudes is based on whether these three components should be considered independent entities or simply aspects of the same concept.

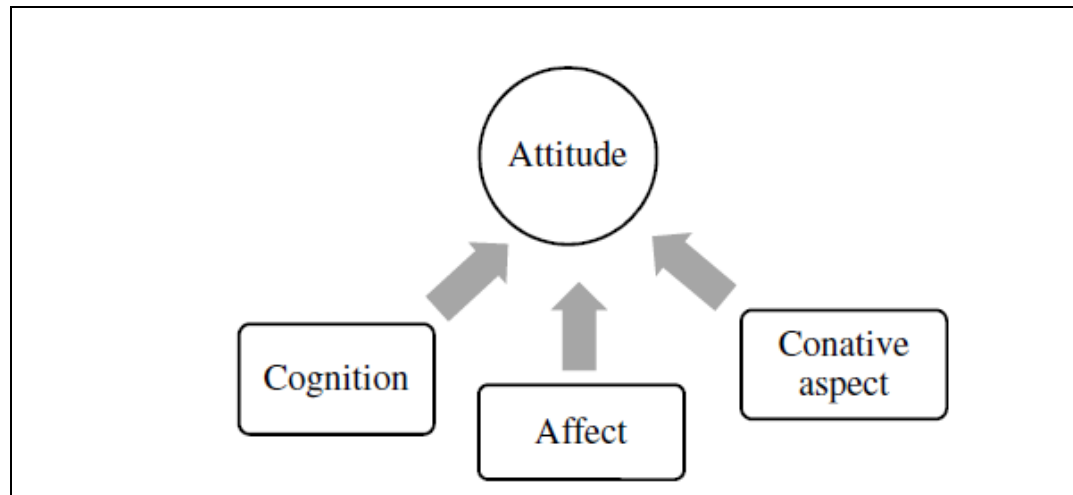
The tri-componential viewpoint (see figure 2.1) holds that an attitude is a single entity comprising three components (Oskamp, 1991; Baker, 1992; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993):

1. The cognitive component consists of the thoughts and beliefs that a person has about the attitude object.
2. The affective (or also emotional) component concerns feelings or emotions (positive or negative) towards the attitude object.
3. The behavioural component includes a person's past actions or a readiness for action with respect to the attitude object.

One of the main limitations of this view is that in order for this model to be viable there must be some degree of consistency among the three components.

The unidimensional view, on the contrary, contends that these three components may or may not be related (Fabrigar *et al.*, 2005) depending on the situation (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

Figure 2.1: Three-component model (adapted from Baker, 1992: 13)



While empirical studies tend to support both the unitary and the multi-dimensional view, the new trend among theorists is to try to integrate the two viewpoints together by arguing that an attitude may not always represent all three components but may even represent only one of them (Zanna and Rempel, 1988).

Hence, an attitude:

may stem from beliefs, i.e., appraisals of the attributes that characterize the object; it can stem from emotional reactions that the attitude object evokes; it can be based on one's past behaviors and experiences with the object; or it can be based on some combination of these potential sources of evaluative information (Fazio and Petty, 2008: 4).

In sum, according to the definitions and descriptions illustrated so far, it is possible to summarize the elements and characteristics of an attitude into an all-encompassing definition based on the tri-componential approach that will be used for the purposes of this study. Hence an attitude is:

- a latent/hypothetical construct
- inferred
- learned
- enduring
- a pre-disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an attitude object

The following section will provide an overview of the concepts that are more strictly related to attitudes and will briefly explain why and how they differ in meaning.

2.2.3 *Related concepts*

In common usage there are a number of terms and concepts that are often used as a synonym of ‘attitude’ (Garrett *et al.*, 2003). In social psychology, however, all these terms can have subtly or grossly different meanings. This section will provide a brief description of such concepts, namely belief, opinion, value, ideology, and habits, and of how and why they differ in meaning from the term ‘attitude’. Moreover, it will also focus on the problematic relationship between attitudes and behaviour.

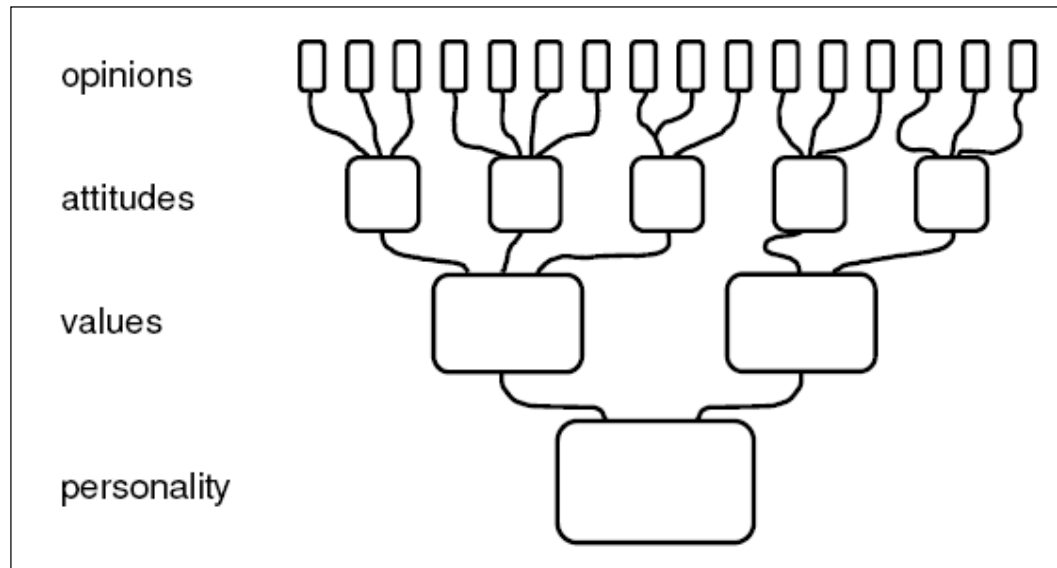
As stated by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), the main distinction between attitudes and other related concepts is based on their affective nature. In this light, the main difference between attitude and *belief* e.g. is represented by the fact that the latter are cognitive in nature (Garrett *et al.*, 2003) and thus they represent the information that a person has about an attitude object, e.g., the Irish language as spoken in Gaeltacht areas which is the particular focus here.

The border line between *opinion* and attitude appears to be fuzzier with some researchers defining the former as “a verbal expression of attitude” (Thurstone, 1928: 531). The current study, along with McGuire (1986) will use these two terms interchangeably thus assuming that an opinion is a verbal expression of an attitude (Rokeach, 1968).

The relationship of *value* to attitudes is generally viewed as more straightforward compared to the previous terms. Values are seen “superordinate ideals that we strive towards” (Garret *et al.*, 2003: 10), namely, broad abstract concepts that represent “a person’s goals or standards in life” (Oskamp, 1991: 13) and which, as such, are the object of strong favourable attitudes.

What is important to note, however, is that an attitude not only has many attributes, but it can also be held with greater or lesser intensity, or be more or less enduring, or be more embracing than others. The scheme in Figure 2.2, which is known as ‘The Tree Model’ of attitude levels, was developed by Oppenheim (1992) to summarize the relationship between what he identified as the different levels of attitudes and their differences in terms of: (i) superficiality (opinions are more superficial than attitudes, while values and personality trait are deeper); (ii) stability (opinions are more likely to change than values and personality), and (iii) specificity (personality traits and values tend to be less specific than attitudes and opinions).

Figure 2.2: The ‘Tree Model’ of attitude levels (adapted from Oppenheim, 1992: 177)



Other recurrently described concepts in relation to attitudes are *behaviour*, *habit* and *ideology*.

The relationship between attitude and behaviour is far more complex and therefore, not surprisingly, even more controversial. Since the 1930s, a number of theories have been proposed in order to offer a description of the nature of the interaction between these concepts.

There are different schools of thought each advocating its own view as to whether attitudes may or may not predict or explain, influence or even motivate behaviour, with two main perspectives: the behaviourist and the mentalist (or cognitive) approach. According to the behaviourist view attitudes can be inferred from how an individual responds to social situations thus assuming that there is a direct correlation between attitude and behaviour. The mentalist approach argues that attitudes represent an “internal state of readiness” (Fasold, 1984: 147) which, when activated, will influence how the individual responds (Agheyisi and Fishman, 1970). The current study adopts the mentalist approach because apart from presupposing the tri-componential model of attitudes, it allows the researcher “to describe attitudes as a mental state first and then to relate attitudes to actual, individual, or group behaviour” (Kellermann, 2001: 102).

One of the most extensive attempts to refine the relationship between attitude and behaviour is Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975, 2010) ‘Theory of Reasoned Action’

(TRA) which not only takes into consideration all the personal and situational factors that may be involved in the interplay between attitude and behaviour, but also attempts to explain how these factors interact. The TRA proposes that there are external variables (socio-demographic characteristics, attitudes towards the targets, and personality traits of the individual) that influence an individual's attitude towards the behaviour. These concern, for instance, whether they think that it is positive or negative to perform the behaviour in question as well as his/her subjective norms, namely, the social pressures on the individual to perform (or indeed not to perform) the behaviour in question and the personal motivation s/he has for complying with these forces. All these factors naturally influence the individual's intention to perform the behaviour. Ajzen (1988) further developed the TRA with his theory of planned behaviour (TPB) which included another mediating factor, i.e. the impact of the individual's belief that a certain behaviour is feasible. While providing a valid theory for the relationship between attitude and behaviour, one great limitation of both the TRA and the TPB is that they tend to emphasize the fact that human behaviour is consistent and equally rationale when it is clear that this is not necessarily so. A good case in point concerns the habit of smoking. Smokers are usually well aware of the fact that cigarettes are harmful to one's health, yet their addiction may be so strong that holding this attitude does not determine the rational choice to quit smoking (Oskamp, 1984).

Likewise, research has shown that, in reality, there is no necessary alignment of our beliefs and attitudes with behaviour. This discrepancy was clearly demonstrated by LaPiere's (1934) and Corey's (1937) early experiments which seemingly showed the lack of correlation and direct correspondence between attitudes and behaviour. LaPiere followed a Chinese couple travelling around the USA and eating and staying in 250 hotels and restaurants. They were accepted in all these establishments except for one restaurant. Six months later LaPiere sent a letter containing a questionnaire to all these 250 places as well as the single restaurant where they did not get service on account of their ethnic background. 92% of the 128 establishments that answered the questionnaire stated that they would actually refuse entry to a Chinese couple. In a similar vein, Corey's study focussed on attitudes towards cheating versus actual cheating behaviour with a sample of university students. Again, the responses given to a questionnaire on attitudes towards cheating conflicted with the actual behaviour of the students since 76% of them had, in fact, cheated in the past.

LaPiere's and Corey's main purpose was to investigate the relationship between attitudes as assessed by questionnaires and overt behaviour. They both concluded that

while conventional attitude questionnaires are useful instruments for the assessment of symbolic orientations, they fail to “make direct comparison between the reactions secured through questionnaires and from actual experience” (LaPiere, 1934: 234).

LaPiere, however, interpreted behaviour as the direct expression of attitude and thus construed actual behaviour as the true attitude of an individual.

In the case of attitudes towards the Irish language, as research has extensively demonstrated (cfr. CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984, 1994), while there is a negative correlation between positive attitudes towards the Irish language and actual use of the language, the opposite does not hold true, that is actual Irish language use cannot be considered the Irish people’s true attitude and an expression of Irish peoplehood.

However, by using a mixed-method approach and, thus, by combining a questionnaire-based quantitative approach with qualitative data gathered by means of interviews I was able to ascertain the attitudes held by samples drawn from different Irish-speaking and to verify them against the responses given by my informants.

Habit is another term that can and should be distinguished from attitude. While sharing some of the qualities of attitudes (i.e. they are learned, stable and enduring) they also differ from them because habits represent “behavioural routines” (Garrett, 2010: 31). Habits occur following an appropriate input or stimulus and are learned through experience. However, unlike attitudes they are mostly non-evaluative in nature (Oskamp, 1991).

Ideology is considered to be a more abstract concept than value and generally refers to “a patterned but naturalized set of assumptions and values associated (both at an individual and group level) with a particular social or cultural group” (Garrett *et al.*, 2003: 11), e.g. a “philosophy of life” (Baker, 1992) and, as such, a sort of global attitude (see also McGuire, 1985). By contrast, attitudes tend to be related to specific objects and be held by individuals. The two concepts, attitude and ideology, share a few similarities but are also differentiated by some significant differences.

By taking a discipline-oriented approach, and following Woolard’s definition (1998), we can see how a more socially grounded approach to language attitudes replaces the term attitude with ideology, thus marking “a different research perspective and emphasiz[ing] the more sociological as opposed to the traditionally psychological focus” (Ó Rourke, 2011: 10). From this perspective, the term ideology is associated with “a socially derived, intellectualised or behavioural ideology akin to Bourdieu’s ‘habitus’” Woolard (1998: 16), which represents the codification of group norms and

values (Baker, 1992) as opposed to the more individualistic approach that characterizes the social psychological framework.

The definition and meaning of the term ‘ideology’ is characterized by the same terminological confusion that is associated with ‘attitude’. As Woolard (1998) explains none of the definitions used is fully adequate. According to the mentalist approach, which mirrors the mentalist perspective adopted to define attitudes within social psychology, ideology is understood to be a mental phenomenon, and, as such, it represents the sum of subjective representations, beliefs and ideas. However, this is not the most influential view of ideology. The more recent and accepted approach views ideology “through lived relations rather than ideation in a mentalist sense” (Ó Rourke, 2011: 11), which whether intellectualised or behavioural is always “socially derived” (1998: 16).

The sociologically grounded approaches differ from the social psychological ones mainly in terms of the social value of language use. Therefore, “while sociologically grounded approaches do not refute the fact that dispositions towards a language are acquired by an individual, they stress that such dispositions reflect a common response to a set of common societal as opposed to individualistic conditions” (Ó Rourke, 2011: 12).

Another important difference lies in the negative connotation that is commonly associated with the term ‘ideology’. While you can talk about positive and/or negative attitude(s), the term ‘attitude’ in itself does not hold any negative connotation. On the contrary, as Woolard points out, an analysis of the literature devoted to ideology immediately highlights that “the great divide in studies of ideology lies between [...] neutral and negative values of the term” (Woolard, 1998: 7).

Contrary to what Woolard contends, that ideological interpretations of language use always mediate “what forms social groups, identities, or relations” (1998: 18), the present study argues that both intrapersonal and interpersonal attitudes as well as social variables such as age and education are at play when choosing and using a language. This is further reinforced by the findings of the present study which highlight that the main differences in terms of language attitudes and language use are not based on the linguistic ideological divide between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland but rather on differences between smaller and more localized linguistic communities.

While it is true that language attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies are to be found at both macro and micro levels of social organisation, the study of language use through the lens of language attitudes allows the researcher to study and discuss the interplay at

both the individual and group levels as well as in terms of both intra- and inter-group language relations.

As already discussed in §1.5, the Irish language in Northern Ireland is perceived to be an important symbol of ethnic identity, with the traditional association of Irish with the Catholic community and the Republicans as opposed to the Protestant community and the Unionist party (Nic Craith, 1999; O'Reilly, 1999, 2001; Mac Giolla Chríost, 2002). The politicization of the Irish language gained momentum in the early 1970s after the onset of the Troubles resulting in a situation in which:

Catholic nationalists speak easily of 'our own language', whether they speak Irish or not, while most of the Protestant and unionist community regard the language as alien (Mac Póilin, 1990: 1).

Yet, the political developments of the last decade (e.g. the Good Friday Agreement) have led to a situation in which the once clear-cut linguistic divide and the language ideology at the basis of it contemporary Northern Ireland (Nic Craith, 2003). Hence, for the past decade researchers and scholars of the Irish language in Northern Ireland have been advocating for the depoliticization of Irish and the overcoming of "language sensitivities" (Malcom, 2009: 33) so as to make it a cultural asset for both sides and an important part of a shared cultural and historical heritage.

This is one of the main reasons that led me to adopt the language attitude framework in order to avoid any association with the ideologies attached to Irish particularly in Northern Ireland. This choice was made after exploratory conversations and informal interviews with a few representatives of organizations based in Northern Ireland, as well as Irish speakers living in the same region. What emerged was a general weariness linked to the association of the Irish language with political and religious ideologies. This attitude became particularly apparent whenever I contacted respondents for my questionnaire and informants for the interviews. According to their comments after viewing the questionnaire (which was sent to informants too), they wanted to make sure that there were no questions related to religion and/or other sensitive issues. This also compelled me (as explained in §3.5.5) to omit from the questionnaire administered in PF and used as a basis for the interviews any question related to Irish language use with Police officers or at the Police station.

The following sub-section will conclude the overview of attitude theory and research by providing a description of how attitudes are formed and the functions they have.

2.2.4 *The formation and function of attitudes*

Another important aspect of attitudes is related to their formation. The major functions performed by attitudes can be grouped according to their motivational basis (Katz, 1960).

Functional theories of attitudes argue that they are formed and maintained in order to meet specific individualistic needs, i.e., “attitudes allow people to successfully execute plans and achieve goals” (Snyder and DeBono, 1989: 340). These functions are generally identified as: (1) the *knowledge* function: attitudes are formed to fulfil our need for a consistent and relatively stable world; (2) the *utilitarian* (or instrumental/adjustive) function: the formation of attitudes the expression of which expression rewards the individual with approval and social acceptance (Katz, 1960); (3) *value expressive* (or integrative) function: attitudes by which an individual expresses his/her essential values and identity, which are “appropriate to his personal values and concept of himself” (Katz, 1960: 224) and by which s/he gains social approval (Shavitt, 1989); and (4.) the *ego-defensive* (or self-esteem maintenance) function which entails the formation of attitudes to protect the individual from external threats or internal feelings of insecurity (Katz, 1960). Both the value expressive and adjustive functions are particularly relevant for the study of language attitudes because “these attitudes allow [the speakers of a language] to fit into important social situations and allow them to interact smoothly with their peers” (Snyder and DeBono, 1989: 340). Baker (1992) and Oskamp (1991) also highlight other fundamental factors that determine the formation of attitudes and which are represented by individual determinants such as age, gender, and other socio-demographic variables, and group determinants such as parental influence, schooling, peer groups, reference groups and the mass media.

Both individual and group determinants of attitudes are influential in determining language maintenance and shift (Fishman, 1991, 2001; Ó Néill, 2005). Therefore, the current study addressed both types of determinants with the purpose of providing a comprehensive assessment of the factors that have determined the fragile status quo of the Irish language.

In their direct relation to language(s), attitudes are a fundamental explanatory variable in understanding and providing an indicator of “current community thoughts and beliefs, preferences and desires” (Baker, 1992: 9). Moreover, given the fact that a fundamental function of language is its interactive nature (Gardner, 1979; Fasold, 1984), linguistic and social factors alike may determine attitudes towards a language (or its varieties). Another distinctive feature of language attitudes is represented by the fact

that they represent “any cognitive, affective or behavioural index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties or their speakers” (Ryan and Giles, 1982: 7). Consequently, language attitudes have exactly the same components and functions of attitudes as identified in sub-sections 2.2.2 to 2.2.3 above.

The following section will examine the main approaches to the study of language attitudes, their pros and cons, and will outline the approach adopted for the current study.

2.3 Language attitudes

One important distinction between attitudes in general and language attitudes in particular is exactly the fact that in the latter case the attitude object is precisely language (Fasold, 1984). Indeed, as Appel and Muysken point out languages are inextricably connected to their speakers because

the fact that languages are not only objective, socially neutral instruments for conveying meaning, but are linked up with the identities of social or ethnic groups has consequences for the social evaluation of, and the attitudes towards languages (1987: 17).

Language attitudes have been analyzed from different disciplinary perspectives such as social psychology, sociology, anthropology, communication studies and linguistics (van Hout and Knops, 1988). As Labov observes, one main goal of the sociolinguistic perspective on language attitudes has been to create a “record of overt attitudes towards language, linguistic features and linguistic stereotypes” (1984: 33). Language attitude research has produced a substantial body of studies that have analysed language-related aspects and issues that may be influenced by language attitudes both on a micro and on a macro level by focussing on the following areas (Baker, 1992: 29-30):

- i) attitude to language variation, dialect and speech style
- ii) attitude to learning a new language
- iii) attitude to a specific minority language
- iv) attitude to language groups, communities and minorities
- v) attitude to language lessons
- vi) attitude of parents to language lessons
- vii) attitude to the uses of a specific language
- viii) attitude to language preference

This thesis will attempt to measure various dimensions of language attitudes: towards Irish in education and in the media, toward Irish language policy, the future of the language, Irish language use, and varieties of Irish held as having greater or lesser prestige by Irish speakers. It is for this reason that categories three, seven and eight are considered particularly relevant here and have thus been the main focus of the research.

Most studies of language attitudes are based on the aforementioned mentalist approach (see sub-section 2.2.3). According to this view, if we know an individual's attitudes towards a specific language then "we would be able to make predictions about her behaviour related to those attitudes" (Fasold, 1984: 148).

According to Baker (1992), research has identified two main orientations of language attitudes: instrumental and integrative motivation. The former component is characterized by "a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of a foreign language" (Gardner and Lambert, 1972: 14) and has emerged predominantly from studies on attitudes towards second language learning or to preserving a minority language. Instrumental attitudes are also mostly self-oriented. Integrative attitudes to a language, on the contrary, are social and oriented toward the integration of the individual with a language group and their associated cultural activities (Baker, 1992).

Approaches to the study of language attitudes are usually divided into three distinct genres (Knops and van Houten, 1988; Garrett *et al.*, 2003): 1. the analysis of the *societal treatment* of language varieties; 2. the *direct measures* approach; and 3. the *indirect measures approach*.

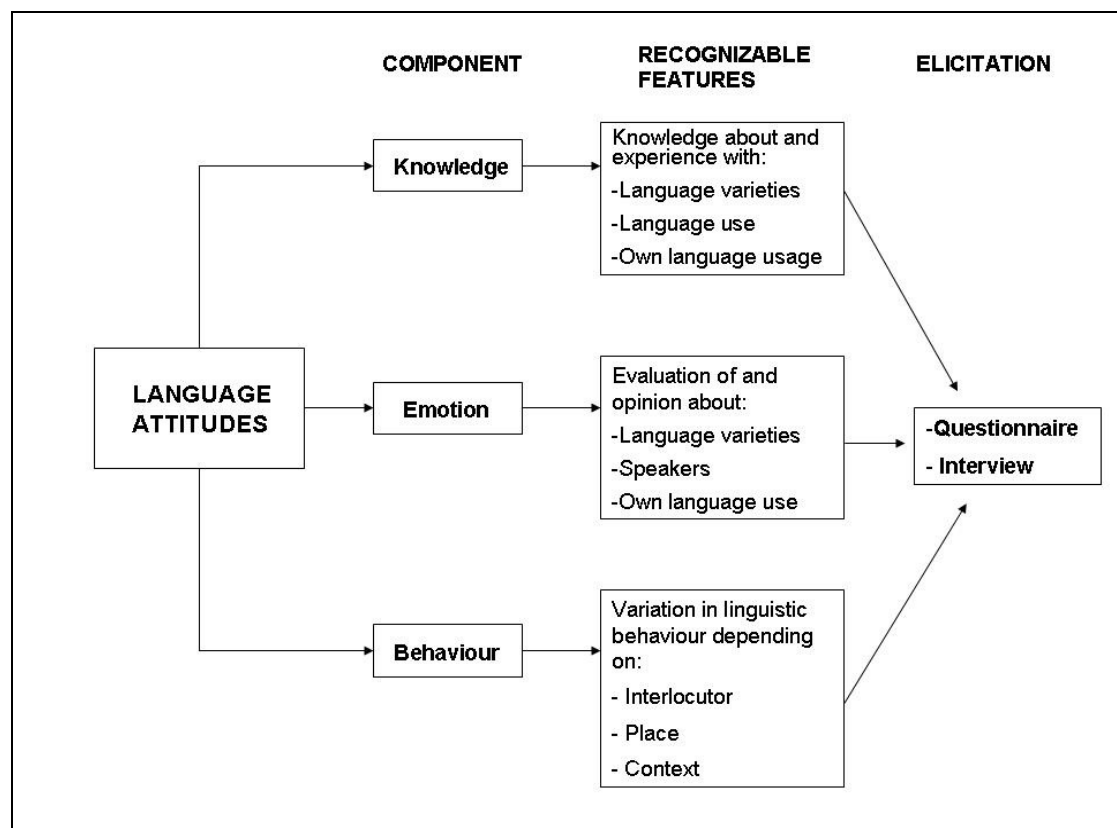
The first approach, the analysis of the *societal treatment* of language varieties, involves a content analysis of how languages and language varieties are treated. The main methodological approaches used are participant observation, ethnographic studies, or the analysis of public (e.g. state) language policy documents. The indirect method approach is also used in all those situations in which, for a number of reasons, it is very difficult to obtain access to informants, or it is not possible to administer questionnaire or conduct interviews.

The large majority of studies employing this approach are qualitative (Garrett *et al.* 2003: 15) with a mostly ethnographic and unobtrusive orientation. Hence, attitudes are inferred from the observation of behaviour or document analysis. Given the small-scale and ethnographic nature of studies employing this approach, this also means that it is generally not considered formal or precise enough (*Ibid.*).

In the case of the present study, while my informal observations were one of the principle incentives that led me to carry out a study of Irish language attitudes and use in Gaeltacht areas, my main purpose was also to compare them in different Irish-speaking areas and this would not have been possible by resorting exclusively to this methodological approach and to small samples.

The *direct measures* approach is used to measure overtly held attitudes and is characterized by the elicitation of data by means of direct questioning, generally by means of questionnaires and/or interviews, and is thus characterised by a greater degree of obtrusiveness. The direct approach is probably the most dominant paradigm of language attitude research and questionnaire and interview surveys have featured quite prominently in the study of “minority language environments and language planning and policy” (Garrett, 2010: 159). The main drawbacks of this approach are basically the same as those described extensively in Chapter 3, such as, among others, the design of the questionnaire, the wording of questions, the observer’s paradox, the positionality of the interviewer, and so on.

Figure 2.3: Recognizable features of the three components and data elicitation in the present study (derived and adapted from Ladegaard 2002: 46)



The third method, the *indirect measures approach*, is used to measure covert attitudes (i.e. those attitudes that a person may not be conscious about), and involves researching attitudes by means of less obtrusive methods, but also more deceptive ones, than the direct approach. The methods employed are observation of unaware subjects, observation of spontaneous behaviour, deceiving the subjects into believing that they are tested for something else.

As the graph in figure 2.3 shows, the elicitation of the attitude and language use data was carried on three levels simultaneously that corresponded to the three components of the mentalist approach adopted for the present study.

After discussing the main theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of attitudes and language attitudes, the following section will present and discuss the main theories and issues associated with language shift, death and revitalization.

2.4 Language shift and death

Language shift and death have been a topic of discussion and research in the field of sociolinguistics, linguistics, language planning, education, and others. As a result there is a substantial body of literature addressing the causes, development, symptoms, and outcomes of language shift and death (Denison, 1977; Dorian, 1977, 1980, 1981, 1987, 1989; Gal, 1978; Brenziger, 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

The fact that languages vary and change, and are maintained or abandoned, means that linguistic alternatives are constantly available to speakers. This opens up the possibility that they might be influenced to choose some alternatives rather than others (Fasold, 1984). Thus, there is room for attitudinal and other factors to play a significant role in how these linguistic choices are made. In effect, at the individual level, the degree of identification with a language and the holding of positive or negative attitudes towards it (and the ethno culture with which it is associated) may contribute to the maintenance of that language or the shift towards another more prestigious alternative.

Within the field of sociolinguistic research, the study of language attitudes can be considered particularly relevant in terms of the behavioural consequences that the positive or negative attitudes held by certain groups of people towards a specific language or language variety may have on the fate of this language.

Wherever and whenever languages are in contact, they are in competition for users. They can thus be seen as commodities in a language market and will survive only as long as they find customers to 'buy' them. Language competence is a skill with a

market value that determines who will acquire it (Bourdieu, 1985, 1991). The price of a language is the effort required to learn it, and its value is the benefit its use brings to its users (Haugen, 1987).

In the same way, Crawford (2000), taking up the importance of language attitudes, advances two insightful hypotheses. First, language shift is determined primarily by changes internal to language communities themselves. Second, if language choices reflect social and cultural values, language shift reflects a change in these. Indeed, he suggests that there is a certain ‘complicity’ on the part of the speech community itself, since people are directly responsible for what happens to their native languages over time.

Many are the metaphors that over the past decades have been used to describe the health as well as the contraction and subsequent abandonment of a language or a language variety as determined by a speech community (often a minority group), e.g., language attrition, contraction, death, demise, displacement, extinction, maintenance, shift, suicide. Most of them have been used to describe the situation and the fate of the Irish language and all of them certainly help describe the language situation obtaining in Ireland in terms of the decline and endangerment of the Irish language.

Edwards (1985: 102-103) describing languages in conflict and language loss by means of the following metaphor:¹

Languages may die: are they murdered, or do they commit suicide? Writers have discussed linguistic demise in these very emotional terms and, as one would expect, varying conclusions have been reached. Many have felt, for example, that languages do not die ‘natural deaths’ but are killed by those wishing to destroy the nation. Thus, Irish was murdered by English. [...] The whole issue of ‘murder or suicide’ is muddled, of course, by ideological leanings. Those supporting the encouragement, restoration or revival of a threatened language are likely to hold the murder view. [...] No single cause explains language loss; a ‘chain of events’ is involved.

Another term frequently used in this context is ‘linguicide’ (Skuttnab-Kangas and Phillipson, 1994: 2212), a process by which a majority language is forced upon an ethnic minority with the consequent repression of the minority language and, often, of the speakers themselves.

However, it is also important to note that, as Janse (2003: x) points out, that:

¹ This is not the first instance of use of the suicide/murder metaphor. In 1916 Pádraig Pearse described the establishment of the National school system in 1831 and the promulgation of English language and culture as “murder machines”. The language suicide metaphor was introduced by Denison (1977) who argued that argues that the death of a language occurs when parents cease to transmit a minority language to their children.

as much as linguicide and linguistic discrimination may add to language death, they are at the same time powerful forces in the reawakening of ethnic identity feelings among speakers of endangered minority languages, which appears to have become a global trend from about 1970 onwards. Ethnic identity is often accompanied by an increased interest in language maintenance.

The plethora of terms and definitions that characterizes the description of the various aspects of the process of decline in the use of a language is contributed to by the fact that investigations of these phenomena do not seem to have found much common ground. This situation may arise from the fact that there seems to be no agreement on which positions to place language shift and language death on a continuum that starts with language stability and ends with language extinction.

There is no real disagreement with regard to the definition of language maintenance *per se*, which is described as “relative language stability in its number and distribution of speakers, its proficient usage in children and adults, and to retaining the use of the language in specific domains” (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998: 185). When it comes to defining language shift and/or language death, however, researchers tend to take one of two stances: (1) language shift and language death are defined as two different, although not completely separate, phenomena and thus require two distinct definitions; (2) language shift and language death are, basically, two different aspects of the same process, and can thus be described, more or less, by using the same definition.

Antonini, Rachele - 997161074 There are some common causes of language shift that he identified in the many studies carried out in this field of research, the most frequently-cited ones being:

migration, either by members of small groups who migrate to an area where their language no longer serves them, or by large groups who ‘swamp’ the local population with a new language; *industrialization* and other economic changes; *school language* and other government pressures; *urbanization*; higher *prestige* for the language being shifted to; and a *smaller population* of speakers of the language being shifted from. (*Ibid.*: 217)

However, he also underlines the fact that the general consensus is that while it is possible to identify general causes of language shift, researchers do not know how to predict it.

The current study is based on Baker and Prys Jones’s (1998) definition of language shift and language death that both summarizes and clarifies all the above-mentioned definitions of language shift and death and their major characteristics. Language shift is defined as the process that develops when two language communities come into contact. It is an unstable situation characterised by the decline of the

functions, number of speakers and fluency of one language in favour of another one, which eventually leads to language death if the process is not arrested. Language death “means that the language totally disappears as a means of communication ...[it] no longer exists as the living language of a community, as a medium of work, social life, religious worship and home life. No speakers exist who can transmit the language to the next generation” (*Ibid.*: 150). The main causes of language shift that might trigger the decline of a minority language are generally ascribed to economic and social change, to the lower prestige and status enjoyed by the receding language, to the lack of support given by public institutions to the conservation of the endangered language. Baker and Prys Jones specify a number of factors that might encourage language maintenance or shift. They include out-migration and in-migration, inter-marriage, increasing industrialization and urbanization, the loss of traditional economic and social structures.² The authors draw attention to the fact that “while such factors help clarify what affects language shift, the relative importance of factors is debated and unclear. Nor do they reveal the processes and mechanisms” (*Ibid.*: 153) of this phenomenon, thus reiterating an opinion shared by the majority of students of language shift and death.

2.4.1 *Language shift and domain analysis*

The context at the basis of my methodological approach to data collection and analysis was the domain.

Fishman proposed that there are certain institutional contexts, called *domains*, in which one language variety is more appropriate than another. Domains are taken to be constellations of factors such as location, topic, and participants. A typical domain, for example, would be the family domain (Fasold, 1984). In each domain there may be pressures of various kinds, e.g. economic, administrative, cultural, political, religious etc., which influence the bilingual speaker in using one language rather than the other. Due to competing pressures, it is not possible to predict with absolute certainty which language an individual will use in a particular situation (Romaine, 1995).

Domain analysis is related to diglossia, and some domains are more formal than others. Ferguson (1959) originally used the term ‘diglossia’ to refer to a specific

² A detailed list of linguistic and cultural as well as political, social and demographic factors encouraging language maintenance and language loss is provided by Baker and Prys Jones (1998). Factors of language maintenance include, among others, the number of speakers, migration, levels of education, mother tongue institutions, ethnic identity, and the prestige level of the language.

relationship between two or more varieties of the same language in use in a speech community in different functions. The superposed variety is referred to as 'High' or simply H, and the other variety(ies) as 'Low', or L. The most important hallmark of diglossia is the functional specialization of H and L. In one set of situations only H is appropriate, while in another, only L is considered appropriate.

Fishman (1972) broadened Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia by applying it to a bilingual or multilingual situation in which the specialisation of functions takes place between different languages. Fishman's concept of diglossia strongly relies on the concept of domain. A domain is defined as "a sociocultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationships between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of activity of a speech community, in such a way that *individual behavior and social patterns can be distinguished from each other and yet related to each other*" (Fishman, 1972: 442).

Thus, for the purposes of this study, individual language behaviour is taken into consideration within the general sociocultural dynamics of the Irish-speaking community. Fishman (1967) stresses the importance of compartmentalisation as a means to maintain stable societal bilingualism, and provides four definitions of the diglossia-bilingualism relationship:

- Bilingualism and diglossia. H and L are acquired separately. L is acquired at home and is used in familial and familiar interactions, while H is never learnt at home and is related to educational, religious and government institutions. Almost everyone in the language community would have to know both H and L.
- Diglossia without Bilingualism. This situation usually obtains in a community in which two disjunct groups live within a single political, religious, and/or economic entity. One is the ruling group and speaks only the H language. The other, normally a much larger group has no power in the society and speaks exclusively the Low language.
- Bilingualism without diglossia. "Both diglossia with bilingualism and diglossia without bilingualism are relatively stable, long-term arrangements" (*Ibid.*: 8-9). However, in many cases such situations may be characterised not only by language spread but also by language shift. This is the result of the lack of compartmentalisation between the H and L varieties, which also leads to a situation in which the two varieties compete in the same domains. It is the result of "leaky" diglossia, that is, one language "leaks" into the functions formerly reserved for the other. One of the outcomes is replacement.

- Neither bilingualism nor diglossia. This situation is the result of "... uninterrupted (i.e. uncompartmentalized) bilingualism-without-diglossia" (*Ibid.*: 9). For such a situation to exist, a very small, isolated, and egalitarian speech community is required.

Fishman includes Ireland's linguistic situation in the latter category (neither bilingualism nor diglossia) describing it as an example of "... the 'successful' implementation of policies" aimed at exterminating the indigenous language. However, it is important to note that given the different linguistic situations obtaining in Ireland in general and in the Gaeltacht, in particular, the third definition - bilingualism without diglossia – would perhaps be more appropriate. This obviously implies that there is no diglossic situation in Ireland. This situation is rooted in the fact that in Ireland there was never:

a strong personal identification with the L variety and a readiness to use it in personal exchanges. Where the L and H varieties are basically forms of the same language [...] the situation is easier to realise and maintain, as there is a continuum between the extremes of these varieties [...]. However, with two completely different languages, as with Irish and English, a clear distinction must be made about which language to use in which social situation (Hickey, 2009: 66).

The main limitation of the domain analysis is based on the fact that by itself it is not sufficient to explain why speakers of language decide to use it or to abandon it. Other researchers have adopted a more individual-oriented approach. Gal (1979), for instance, suggests that factors such as setting, occasion and topic are not as important as the identity of the speaker and his/her interlocutors, which in itself would be sufficient to explain language choice. A similar approach was advocated by Edwards (1985) who attributed language choice, and ultimately language shift, to "pragmatic decisions in which another variety is seen as more important for the future" (71) by providing a definition of language shift that, from a micro-societal perspective, privileges factors that are directly related to individuals' motivations and goals over societal factors such as industrialization and urbanization.

According to Kulick (1992), the study of language shift becomes the study of a people's conception of themselves in relation to one another and to their changing social world, and of how those conceptions are encoded by and mediated through language. In this regard, Karan advanced the 'perceived benefit model', based on:

the observation that languages spread and shift occurs because individuals, consciously or subconsciously, make decisions to use certain languages in certain situations. Those individual decisions are motivated by what people consider to be their personal good. Individuals exploit, modify, and expand

their linguistic repertoire in order to gain personal perceived benefit” (2000: 129-130).

Because of the methodological approach adopted and due to the time and economic constraints described in §3.3 and §3.5.2, the present study adopted the domain approach by considering it the most viable way to gather data on Irish language use in specific places and contexts and with various categories of interlocutors. While it was not possible to account for the identity of the speaker and his/her interlocutors, particular attention was paid, nonetheless, to differences in terms of the (in)formal character of these interactions and settings.

The following sub-section will illustrate the findings from two seminal empirical studies of language attitudes that were carried out by Gal (1979) and Dorian (1981) in Austria and Scotland, respectively, which represent two examples of research focussing on the analysis of language attitudes and use in a limited community or area.

2.4.2 Two case studies of language shift and death

The two case studies presented in this section, Gal (1979) and Dorian (1981), are considered particularly relevant to the present study in view of the shift in focus they represented from a macro sociological perspective to an interpretation of the personal and group values that may be accounted responsible for choosing a language over another. This in its turn implies that:

The question that then must be asked is: Why and how do people come to interpret their lives in such a way that they abandon one of their languages? Viewed in this way, the study of language shift becomes the study of a people’s conceptions of themselves in relation to one another and to their changing social world, and of how those conceptions are encoded by and mediated through language (Kulick, 1992: 9)

Both Gal’s and Dorian’s studies report a history of language shift and decline that characterized the decline of the Irish language too, at both the individual and societal level, such as, among the others, the stigmatization of the languages in question, Hungarian and Scottish, but also the impact of social and demographic variable on language choice and use.

Gal (1979) studied the language shift process from Hungarian to German that has been taking place in Oberwart, Austria. German-Hungarian bilingualism had existed in this town for at least 400 years before the turning point represented by the transfer of Burgenland to Austria in 1921. In the nineteenth century the village began to grow, thanks also to the in-migration of German monolingual speakers.

For the original Hungarian-speaking peasants of Oberwart, the growth of the village and the religious and ethnic diversity were important primarily because they correspond to a new economic stratification. Ethnic and linguistic differences (German versus Hungarian), religion (Lutheran versus Calvinist), and differences in source of livelihood divided the population into the same groups, with little crosscutting (*Ibid.*: 39).

Before 1921, Hungarian had enjoyed a certain prestige in Oberwart, the transfer meant that German became the national language and the language of power and prestige, while Hungarian became increasingly associated with ‘peasantness’. Moreover, the fact that German had become the national language also meant that education, both in national and church schools, was carried out in German. The situation of relatively stable bilingualism changed even more after the Second World War. Industrialization, further urbanization, and the growth of commerce meant that more and more jobs outside subsistence agriculture were available in the German-speaking world. But in order to be able to obtain such jobs, the bilingual peasants had to acquire those symbol of ‘Austrianness’ that would allow them to reach a higher social status. The acquisition of ‘Austrianess’ required the abandonment of Hungarian, the linguistic symbol of ‘peasantness’. At the same time, fewer women were willing to marry into the Hungarian-speaking community, forcing peasant bilinguals to exogamous marriages, a factor which further influenced the shift to German even in the family domain, thus hindering the transmission of Hungarian to successive generations. Another important factor in this language shift is represented by the fact that the local form of Hungarian spoken in Oberwart is considered to be of less prestige as compared to the standard variety spoken in Hungary, even though this variety would not be considered acceptable by local Hungarian speakers in Oberwart.

Gal studied this case of language shift by viewing it as “an instance of socially motivated linguistic change” (*Ibid.*: 2). By focusing on the interlocutor factor rather than the analysis of domains of language use, she argued that the “identity of the speaker and that of the interlocutor are sufficient to predict language choice in the majority of instances (*Ibid.*: 129)”. According to Gal, language shift in Oberwart can be identified by answering to a number of specific questions aimed at placing language shift in a precise historical moment and at determining age-related language choices, social differences between generations and the relationship between style-shifting and language choice.

While Gal’s sociologically grounded approach accounts for a fundamental factor in situations of language shift which is interlocutor-based, as the present study will

argue, this alone is not sufficient to explain and understand why Irish language speakers in the Gaeltacht use Irish for their everyday communication. As the findings from the current study indicate, a combination of micro (individual and personal) and macro (societal, economic, policy-related) factors influence such decisions.

Dorian's lifelong project (1981) on the process of shift from Gaelic to English in East Sutherland is one of the most widely cited case studies of language death. Her work focuses both on the sociocultural and economic factors that influenced the shift and eventually triggered the process of language death, and on those changes that take place at the structural level in the grammar of a dying language. She describes language death as a situation in which "a language which has been demographically highly stable for several centuries may experience a sudden "tip", after which the demographic tide flows strongly in favour of some other language" (*Ibid.*: 51). This "tip" presupposes the coming into contact of two or more languages or dialects, which, in its turn, leads to the association of each language with specific spheres of activity "almost to the exclusion of the other variety or varieties" (*Ibid.*: 74). While the "tip" may be sudden, the shift that follows it is more gradual and is the result of a combination of conditions and factors that "have been centuries in the making" (*Ibid.*: 51).

When Dorian began her study of East Sutherland Gaelic (ESG) the only group that was still using it in their everyday life was the fishing community. This community was created when crofters were moved to coastal areas in order for the sheep industry to be able to exploit their lands for grazing. They immediately became a socially and culturally ostracized and segregated group which was considered and thought itself to be of different racial origins: "their social separateness was sufficient to allow them to remain distinctive in speech, as in way of life, into the twentieth century" (*Ibid.*: 53). The fisher folk were characterised as an ethnic group by "residential segregation, endogamy, distinctive occupation, and also distinctive language" (*Ibid.*: 54). Gaelic gradually became the hallmark of the fisher folk and a means of discrimination. Until the early nineteenth century geographical isolation and social class division had kept the two languages separated. However, when this isolation ceased to exist a 'top-to-bottom' shift from Gaelic to English began to affect the lower stratum of the local society, namely, the fisher-folk. This was largely on account of the fact that Gaelic was not a socially dominant language. National and local institutions, courts and most of the educational system from primary to tertiary level conducted their business in English, the language of power. When the linguistic demography that had existed until the early nineteenth century started to change, the balance "tipped" in favour of English. This

was due partly because of in-migration of English speakers, but also because of increasing bilingualism within the indigenous population. Social mobility became not only desirable but also feasible. This increasing acceptance of the fisher-folk was due to factors such as intermarriage and the influx of people from other areas.

In the decades that followed the First World War, the fishing community began to break the segregation that had kept it isolated both socially and linguistically from the rest of the local society. The same factors that had allowed the Gaelic language to survive and be maintained for such a long a time, were also the same factors that in the end caused its disappearance. Since Gaelic had become the hallmark of a stigmatized identity, there was a tendency to abandon the language. Social mobility also meant that in order to give their children a better chance in life, both socially and economically, parents began to speak English with them in the home, the last bastion of a receding language. As Dorian observes:

The pattern of the shift is almost monotonously the same in diverse settings: the language of wider currency is recognized as the language of upward mobility, and as soon as the linguistic competence of the parents permits, it is introduced into the home (*Ibid.*: 105).

Moreover, the age-correlated pattern sees the association of Gaelic with older people and the use of English by younger speakers. The low prestige of the local variety of Gaelic is also another important factor in the shift and death process. ESG speakers, though loyal to the local form of dialect, believe their Gaelic to be ‘bad’ as compared with the ‘good’ Gaelic spoken in the Outer Hebrides.

Both Gal’s and Dorian’s studies were carried out through the use of a questionnaire, interviews and direct participant observation. This methodology was aimed at assessing the level of use of Gaelic and English in various domains and it was also designed to determine the influence of other important factors beside domains, namely setting, interlocutor, and function, which were considered particularly relevant for the present study too.

2.5 Language revitalization

Linguists regard language shift and death as highly problematic, and maintain that the preservation of linguistic diversity should be prioritized by governments and institutions, in the same way as the environment and endangered species are safeguarded (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Fishman's 8-level Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (1991) approached the study of language revitalization by defining reversing language shift (RLS) activities that focus on returning the language to other functions that were once implemented in that language and that were subsequently lost to it. He sees the main problem as the fact that people who speak a language do not necessarily transmit it to subsequent generations. He talks of 'Xish' and 'Yish' referring with the former to whatever language is being examined, and with the latter to the 'contrastive contextual language'. Fishman (1991) puts forward a ranked division of languages according to their level of endangerment (Table 1).

Table 2.1: Fishman's Scale for Threatened Languages (adapted from Fishman, 1991)

Stage One	Used by higher levels of government and in higher education
Stage Two	Used by local government and the mass media in the community
Stage Three	Used in business and by employees in less specialized work areas
Stage Four	Language is required in elementary schools
Stage Five	Language is still very much alive and used in community
Stage Six	Some intergenerational use of language
Stage Seven	Only adults beyond child bearing age speak the language
Stage Eight	Only a few elders speak the language

Languages that correspond to Stage One are the least threatened because they enjoy higher levels of use by government and educational institutions. Stage Eight languages, on the contrary, are those more at risk of shift and death since they have only a reduced number of fluent speakers left. The remaining six stages between these two extremes represent a graded representation of intermediate danger. According to Fishman's theory, RLS efforts for Irish in the Gaeltacht should focus in particular on Stage 2 and 1 (especially at Governmental level).

Fishman explains why it is so hard to strengthen weakened languages, and emphasizes that the difficulty resides in the fact that "reversing language shift is concerned with the recovery, creation and retention of *a complete way of life*, including non-linguistic as well as linguistic features" (2001: 452). Moreover, when extra-linguistic factors are involved, unfortunately, prejudices, stereotypes and ideological motivation end up playing a significant role. Fishman identifies some misleading and recurring 'traps'. For example, it is claimed that language shift is the only inevitable consequence of the relationship between majority and minority groups; thus, if it is a natural process, nothing can be done to curtail it. Then, it is widely believed that reversing language shift is inherently conflictual in the same way as bilingualism is

problematic. Next, it is often contended that one language per country is enough, that there is no need to acquire and maintain other languages within a single nation. This perspective would lead in the long term to the extinction of thousands of languages around the world. Therefore, reversing language shift, as suggested by Fishman, is a real challenge for it requires linguistic expertise, monetary resources and hard work on the part of individuals and their communities, but it is worth it when different cultures and ways of life are at stake.

Fishman's theory of GIDS served as an evaluative framework of language endangerment for a consistent body of research into language revitalization. One notable example is the UNESCO language vitality framework that presents nine criteria (2003), which, taken together, are fundamental in determining the vitality and viability of a language, as well as suggesting the type of policy measures required to safeguard an endangered language.

While providing a heuristic approach to language revitalization activities, Fishman's theory of policy intervention aimed at reversing language shift does not account for the relationship between the local interaction systems that represent the locale of language behaviour, with "the wider economic and social systems which impinge upon them" (Ó Riagáin, 2001: 212). Yet, in the specific case of the Irish language they have represented fundamental factors in the determination and implementation of Irish language policies. Hence, while it represents a highly useful tool to contextualize the degree of endangerment of minority languages, the GIDS approach needs to be weighed against the social and linguistic dynamics that contribute to the maintenance or the decline of a language and which were the focus of the current study.

One fundamental limitation of all the definitions and analyses of language death, maintenance and shift discussed above is that they all provide a description of language policies as a large-scale (macro) governmental-led activity (Baldauf, 2006: 148) aimed at preserving (and often failing to do so) an endangered language or revitalize an extinct one. For the purposes of this study and in order to be able to provide a detailed analysis of language choice and use at both the individual and the societal level, Baker and Prys Jones's macro analysis of the causes of language shift and death and Fishman's GIDS were complemented with MacGiolla Chríost proposal for micro-level practices in language planning. As the author argues, in relation to the situation of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland, the macro approach has resulted in "the eventual circularity of state policy and the ongoing contraction of the Gaeltacht" (2006: 230), which may be

reversed by implementing the micro-level and community-based language planning practices that began to emerge during the second half of the 1960s in parts of the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. Similar to the *Mentrau Iaith*, the community-based language planning initiatives that were successfully implemented in Wales, this approach is particularly adaptable to the characteristically fragmented and dispersed nature of Irish language communities in the Republic and to the actual use of the Irish language in Northern Ireland which is characterized by being “limited to closely defined and personally immediate networks of Irish speakers” (*Ibid.*: 243). This approach is particularly relevant to the current situation of the Irish language because it envisages that the agency of language policy and planning is based and led by the local Irish-speaking communities, thus enabling them “to give to the language a community-based and holistic form of language planning which would be economically engaged and socially inclusive” (*Ibid.*: 244) rather than being the result of the action of external agencies.

The following section will provide an overview of Irish language attitudes studies, a description of the methodologies they employed and of the main results they obtained.

2.6 Irish language attitudes studies

This section will take a detailed look at several significant studies which have dealt with language attitudes and their impact on the maintenance of Irish and its use in a variety of contexts and domains.

Ireland has been the focus of systematic research into language attitudes since 1973, when the first major research survey on the sociolinguistics of the Irish language was carried out by the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (CILAR) (1975). While representative samples of the Irish population had been surveyed with the aim of assessing their self-reported behaviour towards Irish within the context of Irish marketing surveys, the CILAR survey was

the occasion on which the methodology and approach of sociolinguistics/sociology of language had been systematically used to design and execute a national language survey in Ireland” (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984: iii).

Since then, several other surveys have been conducted which either replicated the CILAR survey or focussed on other aspects of attitudes toward the Irish language and issues of usage.

One of the recurrent features to emerge from the many sociolinguistic attitudinal studies (e.g. CILAR 1975; Ó Riagáin, 1992 and Mac Gréil, 2009) that have been conducted is that while Irish is considered to be an important part of Irish identity and ideological support for it is high, there is no correspondence between the positive attitudes expressed towards the language and actual use.

The CILAR Committee was set up in 1970 with the objective of reporting on:

- (1) Current attitudes towards the Irish language and towards efforts to restore it as a general means of communication;
- (2) The extent to which the public would support policy developments which seemed to offer a greater chance of achieving the aim of restoring Irish as a general means of communication in a significant range of language functions (CILAR, 1975: 288).

The survey investigated domains of language use and also covered a wide range of attitudes towards Irish, ranging from:

- respondents' opinion on Irish as experienced in school;
- beliefs about the viability of Irish and its future;
- attitudes towards government policy for the Gaeltacht
- Irish language use in the community and the home amongst the others.

A sample of 2443 respondents outside the Gaeltacht and 540 in the Gaeltacht were interviewed on their attitudes towards Irish, Irish-related policies and also on their ability to use the language. The Gaeltacht sample comprised of people residing in the Gaeltacht and it was selected at random from 26 District Electoral Divisions and on the basis of people's potential ability in the language (ranging from mid- to high use of Irish).

Generally speaking, the analysis of the responses highlighted positive attitudes towards the Irish language with a majority of the sample agreeing with the fact that Irish is a symbol of ethnic identity and is an important cultural value, with the need for the Government to support the Irish language and to ensure the endorsement of the rights of Irish speakers.

The CILAR survey had a few drawbacks. First of all, it did not discriminate between the national and the Gaeltacht sample, as well as between all the different Gaeltacht areas. Secondly, even though it collected information on several classification variables (e.g. age, gender, education, place of birth and occupation), the report lacked detailed socio-demographic analyses of the participant groups. Therefore, the principal aim of the present study was to assess and compare attitudes and language use between

the three samples, and to provide a detailed description of the impact of socio-demographic variables on language attitudes and use.

The CILAR was replicated by *Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann* (the Linguistics Institute of Ireland) in the early 1980s and 1990s (by Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984 and 1994). However, while preserving parts of the questionnaire used in 1973, these two subsequent surveys sought to integrate the study of bilingualism with a sociological analysis of socio-spatial networks and processes such as in- and out-migration, return migration, and tourism (Ó Riagáin, 1992). Moreover, due to the cost-related problems associated with generating large data-sets, the samples used in these two surveys was much smaller than that used in the original CILAR survey and were each limited to approximately one thousand respondents. In order to mitigate the differences in sample size a probability sample of names drawn from the electoral registers was used “to ensure an approximately equal probability of selection to everyone in the state aged 18 or over” (Ó Riagáin and Tovey, http://www9.euskadi.net/europa_hizk/ing926.htm, accessed 15 September 2011).

To sum up the general results obtained by these two more recent surveys:

Overall, the 1983 and 1993 surveys confirm the stability of the attitudinal pattern described by CILAR in 1973. The positive role of the Irish language in ethnic identification is still very central, as is public pessimism about the language’s future - although it is significantly less pessimistic than formerly. For the most part also, views about public and state support for Irish appear to be consistently and increasingly positive (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1994: 44).

Hindley’s study on Irish language use and attitudes (1990) is of great relevance for the impact it had and the debate that it triggered. The data collected by this survey were based on field work and figures provided by statistics on the national school *deontas*. While some authors (for example, Ó Ciosáin, 1991) have argued against *deontas*-based statistics by underlying the fact that they are overly pessimistic, they provide a more realistic estimate of the actual status of Irish as compared to the statistical data provided by the Census of population. Besides analysing the main causes of the Irish language decline and death, Hindley’s study developed various aspects of language attitudes towards the Irish language and usage both on a national level and in the Gaeltacht. Hindley’s first important claim regards the number of actual native speakers of Irish, which according to the figures he provides is much lower than official data, thus disputing claims that Irish is gaining strength. Moreover, he also claims that the actual size of Gaeltacht areas is much smaller than the official boundaries. Hindley’s work is a substantial contribution to the study of language shift and loss in Ireland and

the conclusions he draws from his analysis with regard to the number of Irish native speakers and the future of the language are pessimistic and sparked a heated rebuff on behalf of supporters of the Irish language (like Ó Ciosáin, 1991, for instance).

Another recent survey published as MacGréil and Rhatigan (2009) was conducted in 2007-2008 and analyzed opinions and attitudes towards the Irish language as well as competence of use on a national scale. The survey replicated previous CILAR-type projects carried out in the early 1970s and in the late 1980s and results were compared to these two previous surveys. The findings indicated the positive support expressed by the respondents for the preservation and revival of Irish. Increased levels of ‘reasonable’ competence were also recorded, with occasions of use of Irish that were mostly informal and domestic. One of the strong points of this study is that it paid great attention to the socio-demographic influence of personal variables such as age, gender, education, occupational status and others. One of the main shortcomings of this study is that by not providing a strict assessment of language use (i.e. by categorizing the highest level of use as ‘regular use’) it failed to present a realistic picture of actual and current use of Irish.

The surveys presented above confirmed how positive attitudes towards the Irish language do not translate into high use of the language both in the community and the home domains. However, some of them also provide a discordant representation of actual levels of use which are either skewed towards an overly optimistic Census-oriented estimate (MacGréil and Rhatigan, 2009) or toward an overly pessimistic assessment (Hindley, 1990).

An important aspect that has emerged from the CILAR and all other subsequent sociolinguistic surveys, as well as the present study, is that there are negative attitudes attached to governmental language policies that do not envisage a direct and more localized approach to language maintenance efforts as described in § 2.5. This may indeed support the need not only of micro-level and community-based and led language policies, but also of studies that look at and compare language attitudes and use in different Irish-speaking communities.

2.7 Conclusion

On the basis of the theoretical and research issues detailed above, the purpose of present study was to explore the following research questions:

- (i) What attitudes do respondents and informants from different Irish-speaking areas/communities hold towards:
 - a) Irish in education;
 - b) Irish as an ethnic/national symbol;
 - c) Irish language policies implemented by the Government;
 - d) Irish in the media;
 - e) other varieties of Irish.
- (ii) What language is used to communicate:
 - a) with different categories of people;
 - b) in different places;
 - c) in different contexts;
 - d) in the home domain.
- (iii) What are the main differences in terms of language attitudes and use between the three study areas.

In this chapter I presented and discussed some fundamental theoretical issues related at the basis of the study of attitudes, as well as how the study of language attitudes has been approached. Particular attention was devoted to the composition, functions of attitudes, as well as their links to related concepts, and their relationship to behaviour.

Language revitalization and shift theories were also addressed and discussed with a critical approach to earlier investigations into attitudes towards minority languages, with a specific focus on Irish and Irish language use.

The next chapter will offer a detailed description of the methodological tools employed to gather attitude and language use data.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The principle objectives of the present research were to identify and compare the attitudes of Irish speakers towards the Irish language in *Gaeltacht* areas in the Republic of Ireland and in Belfast in Northern Ireland, and to assess their level of Irish language use in different situations, contexts and with a series of different interlocutors.

To that end, the PhD thesis is based on a comparative study carried out in three stages in two *Gaeltacht areas* in the Republic of Ireland, the South Connemara *Gaeltacht* (SC) and the Donegal *Gaeltacht* (DON), and in a small Irish speaking community in Belfast, Northern Ireland, *Pobal Feirste* (PF).

The first stage of the study took place in SC and this represented the pilot on which the rest of the research project was subsequently developed. The present comparative study used the pilot as a starting point to focus on a number of different dimensions of attitudes towards the Irish language related primarily to people's experience, views, personal commitment and involvement in the extremely delicate and highly debated issue of the maintenance, survival and use of the Irish language, namely:

1. Various dimensions of language attitudes towards Irish
2. Correspondence between Irish language attitudes and language behaviour/choice
3. Irish language use in the community
4. Potential intergenerational transmission/language reproduction
5. Validity of questionnaire and interview techniques.

These different dimensions and aspects of the Irish language situation were analysed through the data collected by means of a questionnaire and a small number of interviews with the respondents to the latter.

The data collected in the three study areas were compared in order to determine the extent to which different attitudes towards the Irish language existed in these communities that are distinctive in other ways and to try identifying the factors that influence and shape such differences. Particular attention was paid to state intervention (in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland) and particular types of support for the Irish language as well as successful and unsuccessful Irish language policies operating within these two states.

3.2 The research instruments

3.2.1 *The questionnaire*

A questionnaire was devised with the aim of ascertaining and identifying the main attitudes towards the Irish language and the level of language use in *Gaeltacht* areas since this method can be considered particularly helpful for eliciting information on both aspects of language use and on people's attitudes towards the languages they choose to communicate in. All data collected in this study represent the personal view of the respondents on the items included in the questionnaire and their self-reported use of Irish in specific domains. The issue of the validity of self-reported data has been long debated in the field of social sciences. The main concern related to the (lack of) reliability of self-reported data is centred on the possibility that respondents may report what they believe the researcher expects from them (Cook and Campbell, 1979), or that under the influence of the social desirability factor they may provide answers that put them in a favourable light in the eyes of the researcher. Another concern about self-reported data is related to the (in)ability of respondents to recall past behaviours in an accurate way. While some researchers tend to regard this kind of data as of poor quality, others consider this negative view as a methodological myth that was generated by attributing "susceptibility to social desirability responding [...] to all constructs that are assessed by self-report" (Chan, 2009: 321). Indeed, the use of self-reported data is extremely popular among researchers (Dodorico McDonald, 2008). The main advantages of such data rely on the fact that they provide a direct account of a person's opinion, attitudes, and belief. Moreover, the content of some construct, such as attitudinal constructs, are less susceptible to the desire by respondents to manage impression on self-report measures of information-seeking behaviours compared to other self-report measures (Chan, 2009: 320). Self-reports are also easy to interpret and represent "an inexpensive and relatively quick way to collect a lot of data" (Dodorico McDonald, 2008: 3).

The questionnaire used in the pilot study was a monolingual English version. Two versions of the revised pilot questionnaire were offered in DON and PF: one in English (as the pilot had been) and one in the local variety of Irish. Comments written by a few respondents on the questionnaire distributed during the pilot stage of the study, who expressed the wish to be able to complete a questionnaire in Irish, led to the translation of the questionnaire into Irish (see §3.5.1).

As is usual in this kind of research where one is hoping for judgments unaffected by personal issues, all versions of these questionnaires were anonymous.

They were distributed through public bodies (e.g. schools, *Raidió na Gaeltachta*, *Údarás na Gaeltachta*) and personal contacts in all the *Gaeltacht* areas that were the object of this study.

There are quite a few advantages related to the use of a questionnaire as the principle means of data collection. First of all, questionnaires are relatively easy to distribute and collect. Secondly, a greater number of people can be contacted and surveyed than is possible to do by personally interviewing respondents. In the case of this study, the researcher was not present when the respondents completed the questionnaires. Consequently, the replies given to the questionnaire were not biased by the presence of the investigator, since respondents naturally felt less tempted to try to please or impress me by giving a view which was markedly different to that which they really held. This also meant that the questionnaire could be filled out at the respondents' leisure and in their own time.

Indeed, one of the main disadvantages that characterizes the administration of a questionnaire by the researcher lies in the fact that "the interpersonal nature of the respondent-interviewer encounter may push respondents into answering questions in a 'socially desirable' fashion, i.e. one which they expect to make the interviewer think well of them" (Pole and Lampard, 2002: 105). As other authors point out (Black, 1999; Sapsford, 1999) social desirability and other similar factors may indeed influence the answers to factual questions whenever a respondent answers in a manner that (s)he thinks will please the interviewer. Other factors that may undermine the validity of a questionnaire are specifically linked to the measurement of attitudes and the way respondents choose to answer questions (Cronbach, 1990; Black, 1999), which may lead to the faking of results in order to make a good impression on the researcher(s) or bias in choosing options in Likert scales (plumping for responses towards either the end or the middle when undecided), but also the misinterpretation of questions, random responding on scales, and giving intentionally misleading responses.

Another perspective on the social desirability factor is that offered by Fowler (1995) who approaches the issue by stating that the problem is not caused by sensitive questions but by sensitive answers because "questions tend to be categorized as "sensitive" if a "yes" answer is likely to be judged by society as undesirable behaviour" (1995: 29). If, however,

the answer is “no” then such questions are considered sensitive.

One way to try to delimit the impact of the social desirability factor when asking for opinions, attitudes or beliefs therefore is to take a less direct approach. A straightforward approach may elicit a rhetorical or ideological response, contrary to what the research is seeking to obtain, i.e. the respondents will tell you what they think/know is the culturally acceptable answer to such a question. A less direct approach, e.g. the insertion of statements in a battery of attitude items may deflect the attention of the respondent from the answer that the researcher is seeking. As Sapsford (1999: 106) terms it:

This illustrates a very basic point about survey research into attitudes and beliefs – that it is based fundamentally on deception. To the extent that we are open about what we are doing, we tell the respondents what sort of answers we are seeking and, often, what answers are acceptable. Being helpful people, they will generally try to help us by giving the ‘right’ answers, which may defeat the purpose of the research. The purpose is therefore often concealed or obscured in order to get a little nearer to what the respondents might have said in their ordinary lives, as opposed to the very artificial context of the survey interview or questionnaire.

The questionnaire used for the purposes of this research project was specifically designed to minimize this concern. The questionnaire was introduced by a letter stating the purpose of my research project and my university affiliation. The rationale behind the letter was to avoid the possibility that the respondents associated the research with an official initiative, a situation that could have impacted upon the measurement of attitudinal statements referring to official support given to Irish both inside and outside Gaeltacht areas and at various levels (e.g. education, central and local government, etc). During the first part of the research, respondents were further informed of my independent status through a letter written by a representative of *Údarás na Gaeltachta* (see Appendix A). During the second part of the fieldwork that was carried out in DON and in PF, I was always introduced by either the principal of the participating school or a member of the local community who would first briefly explain in Irish the purpose of my research, then, if necessary or when the respondents had any doubts or questions, I would clarify any aspect of the project that may not be clear.

One of the limitations represented by a less direct approach of course is that there is less control over the results. In addition, the absence of an interviewer means that if all the questions contained in the questionnaire are not clearly explained respondents might simply skip some of them, thus impairing part of the results or making the whole questionnaire

unusable. Moreover, a larger number of questionnaires need to be distributed in order to ensure that the target number of questionnaires necessary for the research will be returned. In the case of this study, I had a 50% return rate for the two main study areas, SC and DON, which was ensured by the direct involvement of the directors and the teachers of the schools where the questionnaire was distributed, as well as that of all the other people who helped me distribute and collect the questionnaire. In Belfast the return rate was lower, 30%, since not all the families living in the Shaw's Road community agreed to complete the questionnaire. Moreover, quite often, only one member of the family accepted to do it.

While in the case of the present study, the questionnaire instrument turned out to be an appropriate research tool to investigate Irish language use and attitudes, in Dorian's research (1981), for instance, the disadvantages eventually outnumbered the advantages. The problems encountered by Dorian were linked in particular to the distribution mechanism rather than to the administration of the questionnaire and its design per se. A particular issue was the possibility of losing control over the results when questionnaires are not administered or distributed personally by the researcher. Indeed, there are problems which relate to both the absence and the presence of the researcher as well as difficulties on the part of the respondents with regard to decoding questions appropriately and the questionnaire format itself and this is especially clear "in a population unaccustomed to questionnaires" (Dorian, 1981: 158). In my case, the fact that I had the endorsement of both *Údarás na Gaeltachta* and the schools, as well as the fact that respondents were free to complete the questionnaire at their own time and leisure, turned out to be a strong incentive.

3.3 The pilot study

The principal aim of the pilot study was thus to ascertain and determine the validity and appropriateness of using a questionnaire methodology in studying language attitudes and Irish language use in the Republic of Ireland. In the first instance, there is reassurance in the fact that questionnaires and participant observation have been the main research instruments employed in similar case studies of the Irish language situation. The Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (CILAR, 1975), Ó Riagáin (1992), Hindley (1990) have all studied and analysed the language situation obtaining in Éire

through the above-mentioned research tools with higher or lower degrees of success.

For the purposes of the pilot in SC, the questionnaire was administered, distributed and collected by myself alongside contacts in the *Gaeltacht*, namely schools, a professor at University College Galway, *Raidió na Gaeltachta* and *Údarás na Gaeltachta*. In this way it was possible to collect a larger number of questionnaires in a shorter period of time than would have been possible by administering and distributing all the questionnaires single-handedly. However, it also meant distributing a huge number of questionnaires in order to be sure to reach the target needed for a specific area. At the same time the author had the advantage of being able to reach a wider range of respondents living in a wide radius in the selected study areas.

A self-completion questionnaire was adopted in order to avoid all time and financial limitations connected to a survey carried out with a random sampling technique which is indeed the most representative sampling technique though of course it is more time-consuming and costly than would be possible for present purposes.

3.3.1 Questionnaire Design¹

Since it was clear from the beginning that the time at my disposal to distribute and collect the questionnaires was not going to be sufficient to single-handedly carry out a survey based on a random sample, the questionnaire was designed and structured in order to reduce the time needed to complete it to 10-15 minutes. Accordingly, the sampling technique selected was purposive cluster sampling. This is a modified sampling method that “takes advantage of the fact that most populations are structured in some way , or could be divided in sub-sections according to certain characteristics” (Oppenheim, 1992: 40). Since the population from which I wanted to draw a sample is scattered over a wide area, in the first stage of the sampling I selected the study areas and, in the second stage, I chose the respondents by selecting one or two schools to distribute the questionnaire among the students asking them to give at least a copy to their family. Hence, cluster sampling was considered the most appropriate method to guarantee the representativeness of the sample and to simulate random sampling. The sampling frame was based on data from the 1991 Census of Ireland and the sampling unit that used was represented by Irish-speaking

¹ See Appendix B for the English version of the questionnaire

families with children who attended an all-Irish Gaeltacht school.

The advantages include the fact that cluster sampling is a procedure commonly used in order to “rationalize the spread of the sample and make the travelling more manageable and more economic” (Sapsford, 1999: 84). The main disadvantages associated with this sampling technique are related to the fact that it exaggerates any local oddity in terms of distribution, homogeneity of attitudes and behaviours and responses in general, and that it introduces a higher sampling error.

All the parts comprising the questionnaire were carefully structured and organized so as to make its completion easy and rapid for respondents. Besides being regarded as time-consuming, questionnaires can also be regarded with some suspicion and diffidence. Irish speakers naturally do not want to be considered an 'endangered species' that needs to be studied and observed before it completely disappears. This is what has also been defined as the “fishbowl effect” or the “native reservation syndrome” (Hindley, 1990: 188).

This is the reason why the questionnaire was designed in order to contain mostly closed questions and pre-coded answers. In this way it was also easier to compare and analyse the results than it would have been if the survey had been based on open-ended items or interviews.

The original (pilot) questionnaire was written entirely in English because I do not speak Irish and had neither the time nor the financial means to have it translated, therefore it was not possible to give respondents the possibility of answering questions in Irish. Nonetheless, some respondents did answer the few open-ended questions contained in the questionnaire (in the classification data section) in Irish.

The questionnaire contained 44 questions and a total number of 137 variables.

All questions were phrased in order to avoid any misunderstanding or ambiguity and some attitudinal statements aimed at eliciting quite a strong reaction from respondents by requiring them to commit themselves to a specific aspect of the Irish language issue.

The questionnaire was divided into seven different blocks, which sought to measure and analyze the following dimensions of language attitudes and domains of language use:

- (1) Attitudes associated with Irish as studied and learnt in school;
- (2) Attitudes towards the future of the language, its maintenance and as a symbol of ethnic identity;
- (3) Attitudes towards the Government's language policies;

- (4) Domains of language use;
- (5) Irish in the media;
- (6) Language use in the home and in the community;
- (7) The use of Irish with relatives who had emigrated.

This division into blocks was adopted in order to keep all items belonging to the same dimension separate so as to be able to assess and identify the respondents' attitude towards a specific aspect of the issue presented in the questionnaire. Secondly, it had the objective of maintaining the logical sequence and succession of topics, thus ensuring that all questions on one specific topic would almost certainly be completed before the respondents moved on to the next.

Because some of the sections (e.g., attitudes towards Government support of Irish and Irish language policies) contained quite a large number of items and I wanted to avoid any mechanical responses to these statements, some provoking and/or highly controversial statements relating to the situation of the Irish language were also included, usually towards the middle of such sections in order to keep the same kind of attention to all the statements. The so-called 'funnel' approach, which is so named because it starts with a broad statement followed by more and more specific items (Oppenheim, 1992) was avoided. For instance, the statement "The Irish language is dying" was placed near the beginning of the section addressing attitudes towards the State and the future of the Irish language. To narrow down the scope of the statements contained in this section may increase the directness and bluntness of such items and thus influence the degree of agreement/disagreement with them (the reaction is more controlled because the respondent has had the time to realize what the sequence was leading to). Whereas, if this statement is asked in a direct way in a position where the respondents might not expect it, the reaction may be more genuine, because the respondent was not led to such a reaction by the increased controversiality of the statements. Indeed, as Oppenheim points out

Each survey produces its own problems of question order, which makes it difficult to offer general principles. [Therefore] we try, as much as possible, to avoid putting ideas into the respondents' minds or to suggest that they should have attitudes when they have none (1992: 112).

Questions aimed at extracting classification data were placed at the end of the questionnaire. The reason for this choice resides in the fact that they can be off-putting maybe even considered as prying (Black, 1999) despite their importance in stratifying the

sample. Some of the questions in this section were left open and the respondents' answers subsequently classified and codified. The main classification variables were age, sex, education and occupation. Education and occupation were used in a complementary way in order to be able to classify respondents precisely. Whenever some respondents gave vague job identifications it was possible with my personal observation of the study area and of its occupational and economic situation to get a good idea of the social status and/or prestige attached to such classifications.

A few filter questions were used as internal checks to ascertain whether respondents were really co-operating and also to check the cohesion of the answers given. A cross check using these filter questions helped to detect a few discrepancies linked mainly to Irish language use. Two questions were placed before the sets aimed at assessing Irish language use:

- In which language did/do you speak to your mother?

Only English Mostly English English and Irish equally Mostly Irish Only Irish

- In which language did/do you speak to your father?

Only English Mostly English English and Irish equally Mostly Irish Only Irish

In this way it was possible to immediately verify the reliability of the responses given by each respondent.

A further check was performed after having manually entered the raw data in the Excel Spreadsheet. The main socio-demographic data were compared against each other (e.g. age vs number of children). This led to the rejection of all those questionnaires which had obviously been completed in a misleading way.

3.3.2 Typology of questions

A very large number and wide range of questions were initially included in the first drafts of the questionnaire after brainstorming sessions with academics interested in research in sociolinguistics and the sociology of language, in Italy, Ireland, and the UK, as well as the representatives of Irish government officials and various voluntary organizations. The rationale was to create a very full image of possible questions related to the language attitude dimensions and domains of language use dealt with in the

questionnaire. Moreover, a few important surveys based on attitudes towards the Irish language conducted in *Gaeltacht* areas (e.g. CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin, 1992) and in relation to other Celtic populations (Mackinnon, 1977, 1991; Gal, 1979; Dorian, 1981) were used both as a point of reference (especially in connection with the main critical areas identified in the analysis of the aspects of the Irish language issue) and to elicit common questions and to form ideas regarding the length and format which the questionnaire should take.

After this initial drafting of the questionnaire, a number of people working for State organizations, universities, State agencies, State-sponsored bodies, and the media were contacted. Through the available literature on sociolinguistic studies on language attitudes and use, and informal discussions in a variety of media with the above-mentioned people based on their personal and professional experience with the Irish language, it was possible to identify a number of critical areas that became the main geographical and topical areas to be researched and analyzed through the distribution and collection of the questionnaires.

All questions on attitudes contained a varied number of attitudinal statements relating to different aspects of the topic being investigated in that particular block. Respondents were asked to rate their degree of agreement or disagreement with these attitudinal statements, by choosing one item among a five-point Likert scale. Every point of the latter was then attributed a score based on the level of agreement with statements in favour of the Irish language and vice versa. All attitudinal items consisted of pre-coded statements which asked respondents to indicate their response by selecting one out of a range of five possible replies. The first one was based on levels of agreement and disagreement with specific attitudinal statements:

Figure 3.1: Likert scale used for attitudinal items

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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The score given to each item was either +2, +1, 0, -1, -2, or 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, with the highest score given to the most favourable attitude towards Irish, and the lowest to the most negative.

In the case of questions related to Irish in the media and the language used with relatives who had emigrated, respondents were asked to choose from a range of pre-determined answers. The ‘Other’ answer option was included among the answers to the

question relating to whether or not the mode of communication with relatives living abroad influences the choice of language.

With regard to the blocks investigating domains of language use, the choice was between a high or a low degree of Irish usage with the highest score of +5 given to a "Only Irish" or "Always" and the lowest of +1 to "English Only" or "Never":

Figure 3.2: Scales used to measure Irish language use

A)

Only Irish	Mostly Irish	Irish and English Equally	Mostly English	Only English
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B)

Always	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
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The main advantage offered by this type of questionnaire structure was that the answers were more easily quantified and analyzed. Moreover, by summing all the values pertaining to the statements included in each index, the results were made much clearer and any differences were enhanced. The main drawback could be represented by the fact that respondents may be tempted to give similar answers to all the items contained in the same section thus invalidating the results. This potential problem was avoided by not using the funnel approach (see 3.3.1) with the aim of keeping the attention of the respondents focussed on each statement and question.

Questions related to the domains of Irish language use introduced a list of role relationships, contexts and situations taken into consideration both at the community and home domain level, inviting the respondents to rate their level of language use in each one of them and also to report the use made by other members of their family and community in all the above-mentioned domains. Therefore, all answers were represented by a five-point scale which allowed the researcher to score each answer according to the level of language use in each domain. In this case, the main drawback represented by this system of scoring and quantifying used to analyse this aspect of language use consisted of the fact that the answers to these sections were based on the respondents' self-reported and personal views and estimates.

The two sections on Irish and the media and Irish language use with emigrated

relatives (Blocks Five and Seven) were designed by including, under each question, a fixed number of pre-coded answers, which aimed at pinpointing the main reasons why the respondents chose to watch/listen to programmes in Irish and read in Irish or chose not to do so. The main shortcomings of this section were represented by the fact that the range of possible answers was limited. Thus, the respondents were not given the possibility of writing down an answer not included in the group of items and more specifically related to their own personal experience. In general, all pre-coded answers do not account for all possibilities and nuances. On the other hand, the inclusion of open-ended questions in a questionnaire that was not going to be self-administered meant that there would have been no control over the answers written by the respondents, while the coding of these kinds of answers would have required longer times at the data analysis stage. The only open-ended questions that were included in the questionnaire related to general classification data on the respondents. The reason for this choice is related to a number of advantages that characterize this type of question and that were particularly suitable and functional for the purposes of this study. “[They] are easier and quicker to answer; they require no writing, and quantification is straightforward”, they save time at the coding stage and “more questions can be asked within a given length of time”; no extended writing is required from the respondents, they make group comparison easy; and they are useful for testing specific hypotheses (Oppenheim, 1992: 114-115). However, there are also disadvantages connected to closed questions: for instance, they may lead to loss of spontaneity and expressiveness; they may introduce possible biases; they can be less subtle. There may also be some loss of rapport, though this may be ameliorated somewhat by including an ‘Other’ category. As regards open questions, while they offer the advantage of giving respondents the opportunity to probe, the possibility of answering more freely and with more spontaneity, and despite being useful for testing hypotheses about ideas or awareness, they also present some disadvantages. They are time-consuming and costly; they need coding, which is laborious and can introduce biases because of the need to code the answers and interpret them; they demand more effort from respondents; and “[they] are generally more sensitive to social desirability bias, especially in an interview situation” (Oppenheim, 1992: 127). This is the reason why open questions were limited to the classification section.

3.3.3 *The wording of questions*

The wording of questions and statements is a fundamental aspect related to the creation and design of a questionnaire, because it “is the key to its validity as a measuring instrument, and can contribute significantly to its reliability or lack thereof” (Black, 1999: 226). Moreover, in those cases and situations in which language is a strong identity and ethnic symbol, it ensures that communication is attained in a clear and inoffensive manner and, consequently, that essential factual information is acquired (Black, 1999). In order to avoid any ambiguity, particular attention was paid to how the questions were worded. For this purpose, great care was paid to Oppenheim’s (1992) and De Vaus (1996) summaries of the most common problems arising from the wording of questions as well as their rules of thumb for avoiding such problems. While many researchers (e.g. Kidder and Judd, 1986; Pole and Lampard, 2002) abide by the ‘keep it simple’ rule, great attention is also paid to difficulties that are likely to arise even with the simplest and most commonplace words, especially when they belong to specific categories (e.g. family, friends, activities, etc) (Payne, 1951, in Foddy, 1994; Pole and Lampard, 2002), and to how to use this approach without ‘insulting the intelligence of better-educated respondents’ (Foddy, 1994: 42). A more explicit approach is taken by Oppenheim who specifies that “first of all, focus and contents must be right; second, the wording must be suitable; and third, the context, sequence and response categories (if any) must help the respondent without unintentionally biasing the answers” (1992: 121). Black (1999) provides a detailed list of the most frequent sources of misunderstanding of questions, which may be grouped into five main categories:

1. ambiguous terms or phrases;
2. the time factor (reference or lack of reference to specific time periods or blocks of time);
3. inappropriate vocabulary;
4. the use of clichés, colloquialisms or jargon;
5. the use of emotive words.

Moreover, the wording of questions must also take into consideration how such questions are phrased in terms of the way a question is asked so as not to “strike the respondent as rude, inconsiderate, patronising, etc.” (Pole and Lampard, 2002: 107).

Finally, there are two more aspects related to the wording of questions that are worthy of attention, namely the fact that while the researcher does not want to lead the

respondents to a specific answer (s)he “also has a covert function: to motivate the respondent to continue to co-operate. [An inadequate wording] may affect not only their reply to that particular question but also their attitude to the next few questions and to the survey as a whole” (Oppenheim, 1992: 121-122). Moreover, every questionnaire “will have its own idiosyncratic set of problems and flaws [and] will need to be reflected in the light of its specific purposes” (Pole and Lampard, 2002: 108).

3.3.4 Independent and dependent variables

The questionnaire contained questions aimed at assessing a specific number of independent variables: sex, age, education, place of birth, place where the respondents grew up, occupation, marital status, number of members in the family of origin, parents' occupation, and number of children in present family. Age, sex, education, marital status and number of children were presented in the form of pre-coded answers. Education, in particular, comprised six educational levels ranging from Primary school level to University level.

Occupation, on the other hand, was an open-ended question. The replies given to this question were divided into seven occupational categories, 'Education' which included all respondents working in education; 'Farming', i.e. people working both in agriculture and the fishing sector; 'White Collar', namely, all people working in the state sector and in secretarial jobs; the 'Blue Collar' category included factory workers and other related jobs; the 'Media' category included all people working in the media sector; the 'Self-Employment' category grouped together all self employed people and professional figures; and, finally, the 'Others' category grouped together students, housewives and unemployed.

As noted earlier, the dependent variables of this study are language attitudes and domains of language use and in this case were divided into seven blocks dealing with different aspects of the Irish language question, including, simultaneously, questions on several aspects that were included in each block in order to be able to analyze the same topic from different points of view, for instance, the relationship between language and identity, or the aspect related to the future of the Irish language were dealt with from the perspective of education, attitudes towards Government language policies, etc.

3.3.5 *Irish as experienced in school*

The first block in the questionnaire dealt with Irish as experienced in school. The school domain is one of the most important, not only for the amount of time spent there by young people, but also because it can be considered one of the main basic agencies of socialization processes in children's lives. According to Bernstein "socialization sensitizes the child to various orderings of society as these are made substantive in the various roles he is expected to play" (1970: 162).

It is still compulsory to study Irish in all Grant-aided schools, however, since 1973 a pass in Irish is no longer required in order to obtain the Leaving Certificate. This aspect of attitudes towards the Irish language was developed because of the instrumental role that education and, more specifically, schools, has on the socialization of children. This topic is particularly important in understanding the current language situation in Ireland. The establishment of the National School System, in the 19th century, is commonly considered to have played an instrumental role in the anglicization of the Irish-speaking population (Wall, 1969; ÓTuathaigh, 1972; Hachey and McCaffrey, 2010)².

At the beginning of this century, in 1922, the establishment of the Irish Free State created a situation in which national schools were assigned the main responsibility in the maintenance and strengthening of Irish language use. This strategy, however, did not succeed in making pupils, who studied Irish for twelve years, competent speakers of the language able to use it after school, "... even though a thin wash of Irish competence *has* been applied to almost everyone" (Edwards, 1985: 57).

At present, one of the main roles of the school domain in the *Gaeltacht* is that of maintaining and furthering language competence in those children who are either native speakers or second language speakers of Irish.

Over the past years, new Irish-medium secondary schools of all types (ordinary secondary schools, vocational schools, comprehensive schools and community schools) have been built in order to serve the *Gaeltacht*. The provision of Irish-medium secondary

² As Hachey and McCaffrey point out, however, even if the intent on behalf of the British government was to Anglicize the Irish masses, and even if this was facilitated by imposing English as the medium of instruction, in reality "economic connections between Ireland and Britain and emigration to the English-speaking world doomed Irish as the vernacular anyway" (2010: 43).

schools has helped eliminate the sharp transition and the subsequent decline in language use determined by attendance at an English-medium school.

Respondents were asked what their choice would be if they had the possibility of choosing the amount of Irish they would like to study in school. They were given the possibility of choosing between three answers: less Irish, more Irish and satisfied with the amount of Irish studied while at school. The answers given to the two blocks of questions put to those respondent who chose one of the first two options (less Irish and more Irish) were divided into two separate sub-sections and analysed accordingly. The main reason for doing so was that of comparing the level of commitment of the respondents who chose the 'Less Irish' sub-set with that of respondents who chose 'More Irish' to the negative and positive attitudinal statements on Irish contained in the sub-set they were invited to complete accordingly.

3.3.6 *Less Irish*

This sub-section contained nine statements that focused on four factors:

- (1) Irish as an obstacle to proficiency in other school subjects and progress at school;
- (2) Attitudes towards the usefulness of Irish while at school and after school, and in finding a good job;
- (3) Irish as a symbol of cultural identity;
- (4) Irish as experienced and felt at school.

All items included in this section were negatively phrased in order to assess the real level of disagreement with statements expressing negative judgments on the usefulness and necessity of studying Irish at school.

3.3.7 *More Irish*

The second sub-section contained six items that represented two main factors: (1) attitudes towards the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job; and (2) Irish as a symbol of cultural identity.

All items were phrased positively and expressed opinions on the usefulness of Irish when studying other languages and when looking for a job both in the Gaeltacht and outside the Gaeltacht, and in understanding Ireland's culture and traditions better.

The principal aim of this sub-set was that of assessing the level of agreement with

attitudinal items related to basically the same aspects of the usefulness of the socialization of children in school through Irish.

3.3.8 *General attitudes towards the Irish language*

The concepts of ethnic and cultural identity are particularly important within the general context of attitudes towards the Irish language. "Generally speaking, without any distinct cultural attributes like language or a separate collective identity, no cultural minority can be said to subsist" (Akutagawa, 1986: 126). One of the crucial aspects of the *Gaeltacht* question is that no self-mobilization based on ethnic uniqueness or distinct language took place. Moreover, the *Gaeltacht* people do not believe that they have a separate identity from the rest of the Irish population. According to Hindley (1990: 163) "The identification of nation and language is greatest among professionals and intellectuals in Anglicized urban Ireland".

In the *Gaeltacht*, Irish is not simply a symbol of cultural identity, it is also strictly linked with the fact that in order to ensure the maintenance of the language it is not sufficient to continue speaking the language, other factors are involved such as the economic development of these areas.

For this reason, seven attitudinal statements on different aspects of the Irish language question were included in this section in order to assess the general views and opinions of the respondents on the current position of Irish with regard to two factors: (i) the future of the language and (ii) Irish as a symbol of ethnic identity. This is the reason why all attitudinal statements contained in this block aimed at eliciting a strong reaction from respondents on delicate issues that ranged from support and commitment to the Irish language to personal concern for the maintenance and future of the language.

3.3.9 *Attitudes towards Government language policies*

This block was particularly relevant for the assessment of attitudes towards controversial and delicate issues such as the success of government support for Irish and Irish-speaking areas. The role of the *Gaeltacht* in the general language policy has always been considered fundamental since it was meant to become the instrumental factor in the strategy aimed at reversing language shift and decline. However, it soon became clear that not only was it not possible to restore the Irish language as the first language all over

Ireland, but that all language policies were to be aimed at maintaining Irish language use at current levels in the *Gaeltacht*, promoting, at the same time, the revival of Irish in the rest of Ireland. The role that the *Gaeltacht* was and is expected to play in the survival of the Irish language depends considerably and increasingly on State support and subsidies in *Gaeltacht* areas, but also on the implementation of language promotion policies outside of these. The primary purpose of the thirteen items included in this section was to measure the impact of language policies on the situation of the Irish language both inside and outside the *Gaeltacht* and their effect on the shaping and developing of attitudes. For this reason, these thirteen attitudinal statements were based on how the role and impact of Government language policies was perceived in relation to five specific fields:

- (1) The future and maintenance of Irish;
- (2) The promotion and revival of Irish;
- (3) Government language policy for political and economic support in the *Gaeltacht*;
- (4) The use of Irish;
- (5) Feelings of apathy towards what is being done to revive the Irish language.

3.3.10 *Irish in the media*

This section was developed with the aim of assessing the reasons behind the respondents' motivations for watching/listening or not watching/listening to programmes in Irish and for reading in Irish. Moreover, other aspects of the media were to be explored in this subsection, namely, their impact on the maintenance of the Irish language and on young people's attitudes. As Oskamp points out "The media do not simply transmit information. By selecting, emphasizing, and interpreting particular events, and by publicizing people's reactions to those events, they help to structure the nature of "reality" and to define the crucial issues of the day, which in turn impels the public to form attitudes on these new issues" (1991: 133).

This section was divided into two parts and respondents were invited to choose from a set number of pre-coded answers. They could choose any number of these that they regarded appropriate to their own experience and opinions. The first dealt with questions regarding whether respondents listened to and/or watched television and/or radio programmes in Irish and the reasons why they did or did not do so. Six statements were offered as plausible reasons for listening and/or watching programmes in Irish. They ranged

from the quality of such programmes to the information provided by them. Amongst the five reasons offered to justify a negative answer to the above-mentioned question were: (i) poor quality of broadcast programmes in Irish and (ii) how well they cater for the viewers' interests. The second part dealt with the reading of magazines and books in Irish. For those respondents who answered that they read in Irish, five attitudinal items were offered to justify this positive answer and the same applied to the reasons given to justify a negative answer.

3.3.11 Relatives

This last section presented questions aimed at eliciting information and data on the language used to communicate with relatives who had emigrated and how the choice of the form of communication influences the choice of language.

The influence of communication with non Irish-speaking relatives (relatives who have forgotten their Irish or who have never been Irish speakers) is considered another (although minor) cause of language decline in the *Gaeltacht*. First of all, because the great majority of Irish-speaking people residing in the *Gaeltacht* have relatives who live elsewhere in Ireland or abroad. Secondly, because the distance and the fact that not all these relatives speak Irish influence the choice of language when communicating with them, especially now that everybody has access to a telephone, a fax, or electronic mail.

3.3.12 Domains of Language Use

The block of the questionnaire dealing with domains of language use contained questions aimed at assessing Irish language use in both formal and informal domains, such as the community, the work place, the public domain, the church, the family, etc.

Bilingualism in the local community is a fundamental factor in understanding language shift and decline, since the community provides a context for language choice. The vitality of a language as a natural medium of communication depends on its use in a multiplicity of domains.

The analysis of language use in *Gaeltacht* communities is fundamental in order to assess the position of Irish with regard to the contexts in which it is currently used. Two kinds of domains were included in the questionnaire: Irish in the community and Irish in the home domain. The respondents were asked to rate their self-reported use of Irish in

specific situations, with certain people and in particular moments of their daily social and family lives by choosing one item on a scale of five possibilities ranging from 'Only English' to 'Only Irish'. A wide range of functions/interactions were taken into consideration in these blocks of the questionnaire with the objective of assessing which language was predominantly used in each domain and where Irish is most at risk of decline. The block on domains of language use consisted of five questions developing the aspects of community interactions and the home domain.

The first question 'What language do you use with the following people?' contained twelve items relating to Irish use by specific categories/types of people ranging from public functionaries – such as for instance Civil Servants, doctors, veterinarians, local *Gardaí* (Police), teachers - to other people such as shopkeepers, tourists, students of Irish and so on.

The second question; 'How often do you use Irish in the following places?' contained ten items on the use of Irish in specific contexts and situations. The second group of items not only helped collect information and data on language use in specific contexts, but it also served the purpose of cross-checking reported use of Irish presented in the other questions relating to this aspect of the Irish language question. This is the reason why items relating to domains already presented in the first group of items were included again in the second sub-set - e.g. local priest - church or local *Garda* (Police) station. However, it also must be said that the domains included in the second group of items presented a wider range of possibilities and interpretations. For instance, in church you pray, you go to confession, you exchange a few words with other parishioners, and the same applies to most contexts included in this group of items, such as at the doctors' surgeries, where one has the possibility of talking to the nurses, the other patients and their relatives or friends, and so forth.

The third question 'How often do you use Irish in the following situations?' included eight items on the general use of Irish outside the *Gaeltacht*, within its domains and on formal and informal occasions. This block of items also contained specific situations relating to the use of Irish and/or English when respondents were angry or excited, or when they wished not to be understood by non-Irish speakers or when they helped children with their homework. The last item was included with the aim of assessing a particular situation that often occurs in the *Gaeltacht*, i.e. language use in a situation in which it is necessary to

speaking a language connected with the school domain which could either be an all-Irish medium school or partly Irish-medium school. However, from some of the comments written by a few respondents, in some cases the situations presented might have been too general, and situations in which the use of language depends on the person with whom the interaction takes place were not contemplated.

3.3.13 *The work place*

Since only one item related to this domain was included in the questionnaire, the responses obtained can only be interpreted in very general terms.

In 1957, in order to offset substantial emigration from *Gaeltacht* areas, *Gaeltarra Éireann* was established with the objective of “setting up schemes of employment and helping with the preservation of Irish as an everyday language in the *Gaeltacht*” (Ó hÉallaithe, 2004: 175). While the first goal was successfully achieved and the provision of employment not only stemmed emigration, it also eventually contributed towards attracting Irish emigrants back to their homeland, and, in the end, it was detrimental to the Irish language. Indeed,

As Ireland’s industrialisation expanded in the 1960s and 1970s, the *Gaeltacht* industrial authority, *Gaeltarra Éireann* and its successor *Údarás na Gaeltachta*, introduced modern industry to *Gaeltacht* areas.(...) [However] frequently new plants were out of scale and a proportion of the workforce had to be recruited from outside the *Gaeltacht*, or *Gaeltacht* emigrants were induced to return and brought with them their English-speaking families. In any case higher and more specialist skills had, of necessity, to be sought elsewhere (Ó Murchú, 1993: 483).

Therefore, paradoxically, the role played by those efforts aimed at developing the economy of the *Gaeltacht* have led to the emergence of a situation in which the promotion of the local economy and industries has resulted in attracting returned-emigrants (with their English-speaking families), English-speaking immigrants and managers into the *Gaeltacht*, thus 'diluting' Irish-speaking communities and interfering with their use of Irish.

Údarás na Gaeltachta is now the body responsible for promoting the Irish language through support for industry and the economy in general in the *Gaeltacht*. *Údarás na Gaeltachta* was established in 1980 and is the regional authority responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of the *Gaeltacht*. One of the main objectives of this organization is to preserve and promote the use of the Irish language in *Gaeltacht* areas by funding and supporting language and cultural initiatives as well as a range of language

activities that include Irish-language pre-schools, the provision of third-level courses through Irish, the promotion of the use of the Irish language in the workplace, and community-based language learning centres (<http://www.udaras.ie>, accessed 15 August 2011).

3.3.14 *The public domain*

This domain was represented in the questionnaire by the items 'Civil Servants', 'doctors', 'veterinarians', 'Post Office workers', and '*Garda* officers'. This domain usually presupposes formal and transactional interaction and a certain 'distance' between the participating actors (in this case, the respondent and the interlocutor interacting in this domain).

Despite continued support for Irish at the State level which makes one presume that Irish language use in this domain should be taken for granted, the reported use of Irish in this domain is significantly lower than many other domains.

Until 1973, entrance to the Civil Service required a knowledge of Irish and nominal language qualifications were also required for the Police, the Army and the practice of law. In 1974, the Government of the Republic of Ireland decided that knowledge of Irish was no longer a compulsory requirement in the entrance examinations for the public service. Therefore, as stated by the Minister for the Public Service, Mr Ritchie Ryan T.D., speaking in Dáil Éireann on 7th November 1974:

The Government is fully confident that these changes, which replace compulsion with encouragement, will awaken extra goodwill for the Irish language, and that they will assist the spread of the language within the civil service and outside it by promoting an atmosphere more favourable to it.

Unfortunately, this measure proved to be unsuccessful in fostering an increased use of Irish in the civil service and it was only in 2003, when The Official Languages Act was signed into law by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, that a statutory body was charged with monitoring that all the provisions of the Language Act are respected by all public bodies.

3.3.15 *The Church*

As Pritchard points out “the proponents of the Irish language and the Catholic religion did not always reinforce each other. Indeed at first, the Catholic Church was

suspicious of Protestant pre-eminence in the Gaelic revival, and feared the prospect of an Irish Ireland separate from a Catholic state” (2004: 64). This attitude, however, changed when “Catholic leaders exploited the Gaelic revival’s Anglophobia and diverted its hope for a culturally monolithic, religiously pluralistic Irish Ireland into an essentially Catholic Irish Ireland” (Hachey and McCaffrey, 1989: 15). The Catholic Church changed course and adopted a more positive role in promoting the use of the Irish language when it decided to support the Gaelic League thus contributing significantly to making the language accepted as an essential element in the national identity (Comerford, 1989).

In the wake of historical revisionism and subsequent new perspectives on the roles played by different agents (e.g. the educational system, the Catholic Church, but also secular organizations such as the Gaelic Athletic Association) in the shift from Irish to English in the last century, the Catholic Church is now considered to have exerted and to still have a positive influence on the revival of the Irish language (Collins, 2003).

Beside the fact that the Church is still very influential in Ireland and consistently supportive of the Irish language in the Gaeltacht, the local parish is also a strong community centre where social activities are organized and through which people have the chance of meeting and getting involved in many social events. Where local priests are particularly supportive of Irish, this setting represents an important means of socialization and language use. This is also the reason why the items 'Local priest' and 'Church' were included in two different groups of domains: role relationship and contexts, respectively.

While there is no misunderstanding in reporting which language is used with the local priest, reporting which language is used in church requires a more careful rating of language use, since, as mentioned above, attending a church, not only means going to mass, but it also usually entails going to confession, exchanging a few words with other parishioners, attending the social events organized by the church and so on.

3.3.16 Informal Interaction

These domains are the least formal and they comprise "speech-events featuring local participants whose linguistic competence, dispositions, and other history are known" (CILAR, 1975). The items representing this kind of domain included 'the pub', 'meeting with friends', and 'private occasions' and any other kind of interaction involving informal relationships or informal contexts. They are particularly important in assessing language

use in the community because they give a good idea of the language preferred in interaction which does not involve formality and that usually takes place in an informal setting.

The last two questions of the blocks related to domains specifically concerned with interaction in the home. These questions included a large number of items relating to self-reported use of Irish by the respondents both in their childhood home and current home, as well as in community social interaction.

In many situations of minority language use, the home domain represents the last defence against the influence of the language of the majority. This is particularly true in Ireland, where Irish-speaking households remain the last and only source of production of new native Irish speakers. Moreover, by taking into consideration different generations of the same family it is also possible to measure intergenerational transmission of Irish. Finally, by comparing levels of Irish usage in the respondents' childhood home and their present home it is possible to analyze whether this transmission has been successful and to what extent parents are prepared to bring up their children through Irish.

Use of Irish among children is another strong indicator of a successful transmission from one generation to the next. Moreover, the use of Irish by children means that there is the possibility and hope of maintaining the Irish language at the current level of use in different domains for at least another generation. As Oskamp (1992: 126) puts it:

A child's attitudes are largely shaped by its own experience with the world, but this is usually accomplished by explicit teaching and implicit modelling of parental attitudes (...). Thus many childhood attitudes are probably a combination of the child's own experience and what s(he) has heard say or seen them do (Oskamp, 1991: 126).

This is the reason why three specific items on language transmission to children were included in the questionnaire in the form of attitudinal statements.

The two groups of items related to the home domain focused on Irish language use between married respondents and their spouses, between parents and children and indeed between all members of any household (since this might include grandparents or other extended family as well as lodgers and other individuals who are domiciled there on a reasonably permanent basis)..

These questions aimed at ascertaining the level of home bilingualism in the South Connemara *Gaeltacht* and predicting the degree of intragenerational transmission of the Irish language one might expect from this.

All the respondents were also asked to express their opinion with regard to three attitudinal statements on the knowledge of Irish acquired by children in the family.

3.4 Elicitation of data in SC

The pilot study on attitudes towards the Irish language and language use in the South Connemara Gaeltacht was based on the responses given by a cluster sample consisting of 146 respondents residing in the areas selected for the study. The fieldwork was carried out in what can be considered the heartland of the South Connemara Gaeltacht and specifically the communities of Carraroe, Casla and Carna.

The pilot study was developed over the months of November and December 1998. 75% of questionnaires were distributed in Carraroe and Casla which took account of the percentage of population living in that area as compared to the total population living in the area surveyed. The remaining 25% were distributed and collected in Carna. 160 out of the 300 questionnaires distributed, were returned fully or partially completed, and 146 of these were considered valid for the purposes of the study. Questionnaires were rejected when less than half of the whole questionnaire had been completed and whenever all information related to the socio-demographic status of the respondents were missing.

3.4.1 Choosing the sample

Choosing the sample and the sampling technique to adopt for the study was one of the most difficult aspects of this study. Previous studies carried out in Gaeltacht areas (e.g. CILAR, 1975; Hindley, 1990; Ó Riagáin, 1992; Ó Gliasáin, 1996) made use of three sources of data on Irish-speaking populations in the Gaeltacht: Censuses of population, Districts of Electoral Divisions (DEDs), and national school *deontas*.

While censuses of population conducted within the Republic of Ireland provide general data on Irish speakers, it wasn't until the 1996 Census that a new question on ability to speak the Irish language and frequency of speaking Irish was introduced. Prior to this, no consideration was given to the various degrees of competence and ability in speaking, reading and understanding Irish.

The *deontas* system, on the contrary, while being a more direct way to assess the use of Irish in homes, does not include non-recipients, i.e. families with children aged over-

18, childless couples, unmarried people, and those who did not apply for the grant (Ó Gliasáin, 1990).

The approach adopted by this study in choosing the study areas and the sampling technique was based on the data and advice provided by the people contacted in the first stage of compiling the questionnaire, and also on the statistical and demographic data reported in available publications dealing with language surveys (e.g. CILAR, 1975; Hindley, 1990; Ó Riagáin, 1992; Ó Gliasáin, 1996).

Because of the fact that the areas selected for this study in the South Connemara Gaeltacht are mainly rural, the main difficulty consisted in distributing the questionnaires to people living in the area surrounding the centres chosen to carry out the research (Carraroe, Casla and Carna).

In Carraroe, 20 questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher, whereas 48 respondents were contacted through *Scoil Chuimsitheac Chiaráin*, a comprehensive school with approximately 420 pupils. Its catchment area covers a 50-mile radius in South Connemara, and includes Leitir Móir, Gorumna and Leitir Mealláin. The 48 respondents consisted of students in the last year of school studying for the Leaving Certificate, their teachers and parents and/or relatives. In Casla, 32 people were contacted through *Raidió na Gaeltachta*. People working for the company were asked to distribute 4/5 questionnaires each amongst Irish-speaking relatives and friends living in the Gaeltacht. In Carna, 11 questionnaires were administered to people contacted personally and 23 questionnaires were distributed through *An Scoil Phobail* (the Community School). *An Scoil Phobail* is a school with 185 pupils which serves a catchment area of a 15/20-mile radius in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. Finally, 12 questionnaires were distributed and collected among university students coming from the South Connemara Gaeltacht and attending University College Galway in order to reach the necessary number of complete questionnaires from respondents belonging to the 18-25 age group.

As a result of distributing questionnaires to people working in schools and for *Raidió na Gaeltachta* there is a slight bias in the sample concerning the type of occupation of the respondents with an over-representation of people working in the media sector and in education.

In *Raidió na Gaeltachta*, I was introduced by my contact to all the people who were going to fill in the questionnaire and/or distribute it on my behalf. With regard to the

school, I contacted the principals of each school, briefly explained the aims of my research and why I needed to distribute the questionnaires to and through their pupils, I then mentioned the letter of introduction *Údarás na Gaeltachta* had written to introduce me and my research.

3.4.2 The pre-test

A small pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted in the same areas in which the survey was to be carried out on a self-selected sample of twenty-five respondents drawn from the same population as the target sample. This pre-test had the aim of identifying and eliminating potential problems and gaining a general idea of what kind of data and results I could expect to obtain.

All attitudinal items that somehow represented a repetition of a concept or opinion expressed elsewhere were excluded, and the same criteria were applied to a few questions relating to biographical data which the respondents of the pre-test sample considered too personal, i.e. questions on income. The wording of many attitudinal items was simplified in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

Most blocks were restructured and redesigned in order to ensure that there were no repetitions of items and to make the completion of the questionnaire as quick and easy as possible.

3.5 Design of the main study

3.5.1 The Donegal Gaeltacht

Most of the general structure of the questionnaire in terms of design, questions, and wording used for the SC stage of the research were retained for the second stage of the project. Although the pilot questionnaire did not require many changes, having proved to be appropriate for this kind of research in Gaeltacht areas, a few modifications were made following the experience acquired with the pilot study and comments made both by experts and the respondents.

Generally speaking, the pre-test for the pilot study had already revealed problems connected with the elicitation of classification data and, in particular, to questions asking about income. This question was taken out of the questionnaire used in the pilot study.

Nonetheless, the reluctance of respondents to answer personal questions in the pilot study, despite preserving their anonymity, remained, resulting in the omission of some responses on behalf of a few respondents at the moment of answering such questions.

The main change made to the questionnaire was that in the second stage of the research I decided to give the option to respondents of choosing between an Irish or an English written questionnaire, however I did not want to interfere in this choice. The respondents could have felt that in order to help me read and understand their answers they had to fill out the English version of the questionnaire. My approach was to explain to the respondents, whenever I could, that they could freely choose between the two versions. Whenever the questionnaires were not distributed by me but were distributed to the respondents by a (native) Irish speaker, the research and myself were introduced by a letter placed on top of the two versions that were distributed together. In this case, the two versions were presented with the Irish version on top. This approach was chosen and privileged in the distribution of questionnaires. The fact that a respondent chose to complete the Irish version of the questionnaire also meant that s(he) was entitled to receive any required explanation and/or information in Irish, an option I was not able to provide - firstly because as already mentioned I do not speak Irish, and, secondly, because I could not afford to employ an interpreter to do so. Therefore, the solution of having an Irish speaker do this on my behalf turned out to be the most reasonable option in those circumstances. Through her research in the Pakistani community in Tyneside, Moffatt (1990: 376) experienced that

one of the most likely outcomes [of being a non-native speaker of Panjabi] is that more English will be used because of the researcher's presence. While it is impossible to be certain of the observer effect, surely it is better for a member of the community to be involved in the research project and to play a central role in data collection at the very least.

Harkness and Schoua-Glusberg (1998: 88) have remarked that:

the need to translate a questionnaire is sometimes apparent from the outset if one or more targeted populations is known to need a different language from the one in which the questionnaire is\will be designed.

In the present context, the need for the research instrument used here to be available bilingually actually only became apparent at a later stage, i.e. only after the questionnaires that had been distributed in the pilot stage of the research project. Since the questionnaires

were originally conceived as being delivered in English only, the subsequent bilingual questionnaire used in the second stage of the study (the one distributed in the Donegal Gaeltacht and in the Shaw's Road Community in Belfast) was initially translated by a professional translator selected by *Údarás na Gaeltachta*. The translated versions were then reviewed by staff at *Údarás* before they were finally approved for fieldwork (refer to Appendix C for translations). Upon completion of the latter, open-ended answers were then translated back into English following the same process used for the translation of the initial questionnaire.

Even though the translation of research instruments is not the only option available to gather information and data across cultures, it is generally considered to be the most viable option if item equivalence and scalar equivalence are to be ensured (Hui and Triandis, 1985; Flaherty et al., 1988; Harkness and Schoua-Glusberg, 1998; Van de Vijver, 1998). Since

languages are not isomorphic [...] translation cannot be expected to operate on a one-to-one basis across languages. This means that what goes in (the source language text) cannot be completely matched by what comes out (the target language text) (Harkness and Schoua-Glusberg, 1998: 93).

Therefore, any translation will necessarily produce “difference as well as similarity” (Harkness and Schoua-Glusberg, 1998: 93) with consequent losses and gains (Newmark, 1988) at a semantic, grammatical, syntactic and idiomatic level.

Hence, the principle applied to the translation of the questionnaire employed for this research project was the appropriateness or adequacy of the translation in terms of what Harkness and Schoua-Glusberg define as “the degree to which it successfully fulfils stipulated goals for the translation, within the constraints of what is possible” (1998: 94).

The only problem that emerged in relation to the Irish versions of the questionnaire was that some people were afraid they would not be able to read it or understand it. This is because many of the respondents who had emigrated before the spelling reforms of the 1950s had not learnt to write with the new spelling upon their return.

When confronted with this situation I usually explained that they could complete the English version instead of the Irish one and left them to use their own discretion. However, when they did eventually manage to read it, they usually realized that they were indeed able to complete their responses in Irish on the Irish version of the questionnaire. Had I been present during the completion of the questionnaire, these respondents would have probably

chosen to complete it in English in order to avoid any embarrassing situation or misunderstanding both on their or on my behalf.

A third important change was the addition of one question at the end of the section investigating attitudes towards the Government's language policies. This question not only introduced a direct comparison between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, but also aimed to assess the respondents' awareness and knowledge of the different language policies implemented in these two areas.

3.5.2 Sample selection in DON

On the basis of the results obtained in the South Connemara *Gaeltacht* and the positive outcome of the sampling technique employed in that specific area, it was decided to implement the same kind of cluster sampling by choosing the respondents on the basis of two main variables: (i) age and (ii) sex. The main reasons for this choice, again, were related to time and financial restrictions. As was the case with the pilot study, random sampling was considered problematic because it is time-consuming and expensive to reach a population that is scattered over a vast territory. Furthermore, the cluster sampling technique and the way in which the distribution and collection of questionnaires were implemented were going to allow me to keep some distance from the sample since I did not want to influence the responses to the questionnaire in any possible way.

3.5.3 Elicitation of data

The same criteria used in the South Connemara *Gaeltacht* were applied to the stage of the research carried out in the Donegal *Gaeltacht*. The questionnaire distribution and collection took place in a part of the heartland of this *Gaeltacht* which encompasses *Gaoth Dobhair* (Gweedore), the Rosses and *Rann na Feirste* (Ranafast). Two schools were chosen for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires: the primary school in *Rann na Feirste* and the secondary school in *Gaoth Dobhair*. This choice was not only based on the fact that their catchment areas allowed me to reach respondents living in the selected Irish-speaking areas of the Donegal *Gaeltacht*, but it also enabled me to reach different age groups, e.g. different generations of parents.

15 questionnaires (out of a total of 40 distributed) were collected through the primary school whose catchment area basically comprises the community of *Rann na*

Feirste and has approximately 40 students. In this school I was personally introduced to the principal because one of the daughters of my contact in *Údarás na Gaeltachta* attended it. I was then presented in Irish to one of the classrooms by the principal and then asked to explain my presence in the community and the objectives of my research.

The secondary school in *Gaoth Dobhair* (*Pobalscoil Ghaoth Dobhair*) has a catchment area that covers the whole *Gaoth Dobhair* area plus part of the Rosses and *Rann na Feirste* and has approximately 300 students. 118 questionnaires (out of 230 distributed in total) were collected through this school.

3 questionnaires (out of 10 distributed as a whole) were collected through *Raidió na Gaeltachta*. In this case, the number returned was much lower than the total number of questionnaires collected through the Galway branch of the same company. The main explanation is that in the Donegal Gaeltacht I had no direct contacts who could encourage his/her colleagues to complete and return the questionnaire.

12 questionnaires (out of 12) were collected at *Údarás na Gaeltachta*. The remaining questionnaires were distributed and collected personally by myself in the *Rann na Feirste* community where I was staying while I was carrying out the research.

A total number of 148 questionnaires, out of the 300 distributed in all, was considered to be a feasible quantity to address the research questions that underpin the research³. 64 had been filled out in the English version, whereas 84 respondents chose the Irish version. This latter higher percentage may be due to a combination of reasons: the fact that respondents were probably encouraged by the fact that they were not interviewed in order to complete the questionnaire but were asked to read the questions and to write only a few things; the fact that most questionnaires were distributed through all-Irish schools also may have had a bearing on the fact that a higher number of questionnaires were completed in Irish. Moreover, the fact that the Donegal variety of Irish was chosen might have elicited a favourable response in this sense on the part of the respondents.

While in the South Connemara Gaeltacht, *Údarás na Gaeltachta* wrote a letter of introduction in Irish which briefly explained the aims and objectives of my research inviting people to co-operate in my project, in the Donegal Gaeltacht I was personally

³ The sample size was established by using the appropriate formula to estimate the required number of questionnaires (Kish, 1965).

introduced by a contact in the local branch of *Údarás na Gaeltachta*. In this case my contact at *Údarás na Gaeltachta* thought that a letter might have had a negative effect (e.g. seen as a sort of ‘obligation’ to co-operate). Therefore, I decided to write a letter in English introducing myself and the purpose of my research. This is a clear example of how much techniques for eliciting responses vary and must be conducted differently according to the area and people the researcher is dealing with (see § 2.1 above). Pong (1991: 50), for instance, during her fieldwork among the Chinese community in Newcastle upon Tyne, noticed that trying to contact respondents and introducing herself to them by

quoting the names of some community leaders sometimes even appeared to be counterproductive in a community where people are normally reserved and suspicious of enquiries concerning ethnic origins, composition of household, income and occupational status.

3.5.4 *The Shaw’s Road Community (Pobal Feirste) in Belfast, Northern Ireland*

The Shaw’s road community developed in the late 1960s (Maguire, 1986; 1990) when a group of language activists, all learners of Irish as a second language, “resolved to raise their children as Irish-speakers and to build a community wherein Irish would be the first language of home, neighbourhood and Primary School” (Maguire, 1986: 73). Thus, they set up a cooperative, bought a piece of land in West Belfast, and built their own houses. The houses have been built along Shaw’s Road (a continuation of Falls Road) and the internal road that leads to the primary school founded by the community in 1971. In 2000, the initial number of the 11 founding families had increased to 16 (a total number of 55 people).

3.5.5 *Modified version of the questionnaire*

Great care was taken to avoid any offensive or emotionally-charged references to the political situation in Northern Ireland. Therefore, we chose to omit a few items from the questionnaire distributed in Belfast, namely any reference to the use of Irish in all those settings where it was obvious that it would trigger an emotionally-charged reaction (e.g. the police station). As a consequence, those items are not available for comparison with the answers given to the questionnaires used in the Republic of Ireland. One last change was related to the introduction of a binary question at the end of the block containing statements on attitudes towards Government support to the maintenance of Irish, i.e.: “In your opinion,

is governmental support for the Irish language in Irish-speaking districts of the Republic better than that offered to the Irish language in Irish-speaking districts of Northern Ireland?”

3.5.6 Elicitation of data in the Shaw's Road Community

Contact was made at *Cultúrlann MacAdam Ó Fiaich* (the Irish cultural centre in Falls Road) with one of the members of the Shaw's Road community who introduced me to some of the people living there and to the teachers of the community's primary school (*Bunscoil Phobal Feirste*). Then I distributed and collected the questionnaire by knocking on all the doors of the 16 families who comprise the community. This method allowed me to collect 17 valid questionnaire from each of the 9 families who accepted to complete it as well as a few teachers from the school who also agreed to take part in the study.

The main problem encountered in this community was the choice of language version. When asked about the language they preferred to complete the questionnaire in, many respondents usually answered 'whatever' or 'it doesn't matter'. When pressured into making a choice, most of the respondents would not relent, thus it was left to me to choose the language version. When confronted with this attitude, I always chose to leave a copy in the local variety of Irish.

3.6 The interviews

Despite the quite common assumption highlighted by Silverman (2001) that qualitative research, being often considered a relatively minor methodology “should only be contemplated at early or ‘exploratory’ stages of a study [to] familiarize oneself with a setting before the serious sampling and counting begin” (2001: 32), I decided to integrate the data gathered by means of the questionnaire with qualitative data collected via face-to-face interviews. I decided to do so after reading a number of comments written both in English and Irish on the questionnaires, which raised a number of matters concerning issues that had not been included among the attitudinal statements and pre-coded answers, namely anecdotal references to the respondents' experience with Irish in relation to various aspects of its use, and which clearly showed the respondents' frustration at not being able to express their own opinion more freely. Many of these written commentaries expressed

opinions on sub-domains of Irish language use and specific attitudinal dimensions that had not been explored in depth by the questions contained in the questionnaire, namely the language spoken in the school playground and with different interlocutors, and attitudes towards the different varieties of Irish. Thus, it was deemed necessary to try to explore these specific aspects of usage further.

The ardent debate between the advocates of quantitative versus qualitative research paradigms has been going on for quite a long time (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Indeed, until quite recently, there was a shared concern that qualitative research was not completely reliable since it tended towards:

an anecdotal approach [...] in relation to conclusions or explanations [...]. Brief conversations, snippets from unstructured interviews [...] are used to provide evidence of a particular contention. There are grounds for disquiet in that the representativeness of generality of these fragments is rarely addressed (Bryman, 1988: 77).

Nonetheless, an increasing number of researchers now tend to apply a mixed method approach thus recognizing that

data collection and analysis can be done in both modes, and in various combinations, during all phases of the research project. Just as important is that there *can* be back-and-forth interplay between combinations of both types of procedures, with qualitative data affecting quantitative analyses and vice versa (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 31).

Interviewing is one of the most common research tools employed to generate both quantitative and qualitative data in the social sciences (Pole and Lampard, 2002). An interview may be defined as a “verbal exchange of information between two or more people for the principal purpose of one gathering information from the other(s)” (Pole and Lampard, 2002: 126). A conversation is “usually between two people. But [an interview] is a conversation where one person – the interviewer – is seeking responses for a particular purpose from the other person: the interviewee” (Gillham, 2000: 1).

The fact that “the form and style of an interview is determined by its purpose” (Gillham, 2000: 1) means that there are many different kinds of interviews that are conducted for different purposes, and implies that information will be collected from specific people, at a specific time and in specific places, in the presence of specific constraints as well as aiming to “obtain information and understanding of issues relevant to the general aims and specific questions of a research project” (Gillham, 2000: 2).

As with the use of questionnaires for data collection purposes:

One cannot say that interviews are always good or always bad, but rather that interviews are preferable for some problems, or under some conditions, and not others – and often, it has to be admitted, the choice will eventually be made for quite extraneous reasons such as costs or pressure of time (Oppenheim, 1992: 81).

The main advantages listed by numerous authors (e.g. Oppenheim, 1992; Frey and Mertens Oishi, 1995) in relation to in-person interviewing include the need to ask many open-ended questions, the fact that interviews allow researchers to obtain improved response rates and to play a more direct role in “enhancing respondent participation, guiding the questioning, answering the respondent’s questions, and clarifying the meaning of responses” (Frey and Mertens Oishi, 1995: 3) by probing and following up verbal cues and interesting responses (Robson, 2002: 272-273).

The main disadvantages are mostly based on the time-cost factor both during the interview operation (in terms of developing and piloting the interview as well as organizing and travelling to and from the locations selected for the interviews) and the data-processing stage (transcribing and analysing the interviews) (Gillham, 2000: 9-10).

3.6.1 Interview design and typology of questions

The interviews were structured along the lines of the questionnaire structure by basically maintaining the same order and wording of the general questions as they appeared in the questionnaire. Thus, the informants were free to answer questions in their own terms without the constraints of having to choose from multi-choice answers or rating scales. In addition, informants were also asked a few questions on the issue that had emerged from the spontaneous comments written by the respondents to the questionnaire, namely their attitudes towards other varieties of Irish, whether they were able to understand and communicate with people speaking other dialects of Irish, etc.

The interviews were face-to-face and audio recorded and the answers to the open questions were typed out verbatim.

The interviews were conducted in English. Before starting each interview I apologized for not being able to conduct the interview in Irish and then I clarified its purpose and the objectives of the research project. Moreover, I also underlined the scientific relevance of the contribution each informant would give. Then I gave the

informants a general idea of the probable length of the interview (15 to 20 minutes) and that I was going to record it in order to be able to document the whole process in the most accurate way.

After this brief introductory stage I then proceeded to ask the questions. Informants were asked the same questions in the same order. However, whenever an interesting topic not included in the list of questions and which was deemed particularly relevant for the purposes of the study it would be pursued by probing the matter further.

All interviews ended with my thanks to the interviewees for taking part in the study and a final question asking them if they had anything further to add to what said in the course of the interview.

For the purposes of data analysis, at the end of the interview informants were asked to fill in the socio-demographic questions contained in the questionnaire used for the other stages of the research.

3.6.2 *The informants*

The sample of people that were interviewed for the last stage of data collection was a self-selected sample which included individuals contacted through personal contacts. All the people who took part in the interviews were Irish speakers who had grown up in a Gaeltacht area and who had a wide range of perspectives and experiences to share and talk about in relation to the Irish language, but, obviously, they did not constitute a random and representative sample of the Irish-speaking population of the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Twenty-three face-to-face semi-structured interviews were carried out in 2004, in Derry and Galway with a sample of people comprising officers working for official and semi-official organizations as well as students.

In Derry, I interviewed 5 people: the Development Officer at *An Gaeláras* (a community resource centre dedicated to the promotion of the Irish language); 2 officers at *Cumann Gaelach Chnos na Ros Doire* (the Irish Society Rosemount Derry); and 2 mature students at Magee College, University of Ulster. Most of the people who accepted to be interviewed in Derry requested to see a copy of the questionnaire before accepting to sit for the interview.

In Galway, a total of 12 students were contacted and interviewed through one of the

lecturers who asked his students to participate in this study. The informants came to the interview after having been briefly debriefed by the individuals who had put them in contact with me. The interviews were conducted in a classroom where one by one I met and interviewed the students between their lessons and during their breaks. The data of one student was dismissed from the study, because problems had occurred with the recording of the interview.

In Carraroe I was able to contact, through the lecturer who had facilitated the interviews at Galway University, the director of *Áras Mháirtín Uí Chadhain* (the Irish Language Acquisition and Maintenance Centre for the National University of Ireland, Galway), who asked the people enrolled there to take part in the interviews. They gave me a small room where I was able to interview 7 people.

Nineteen out of the 23 interviews conducted were considered valid. Due to problems related to the bad quality of some of the recordings, I had to rule out four interviews (two that had been carried out in Derry and two from Galway).

The typical interview lasted approximately 15-20 minutes, but some were lengthier and on a few occasions I spent an hour or more with a few interviewees.

Since almost all informants, with the exception of three people in Derry, were recruited through University lecturers they are all in the younger age groups. Moreover, they obviously are in the higher educational group (see §5.2 for a more detailed description of the interviewees).

3.6.3 *Researcher's biography and positionality*

The issue of the positionality of the researcher is central to any discussion of methods and techniques for conducting qualitative research in the social sciences (Ganga and Scott, 2006).

There is a vast literature devoted to the ethics and dynamics of the relationship between researchers and participants “emanating from a range of disciplinary fields with their own particular subject specialisms, research philosophies and academic cultures” (*Ibid.*, 2006), which has tended to focus on the insider versus outsider status of the researcher vis-à-vis his/her informants.

As Dwyer and Buckle (2009) point out, much of the discussion on the membership roles of researchers in qualitative research has tended to focus on the areas pertinent to

observation, field research, and ethnography. However, given the role played by the researcher and his/her influence over all the aspects of fieldwork and data analysis, the issue of researcher membership should be extended to all other approaches of qualitative methodology exactly because:

Whether the researcher is an insider, sharing the characteristic, role, or experience under study with the participants, or an outsider to the commonality shared by participants, the personhood of the researcher, including her or his membership status in relation to those participating in the research, is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation (*Ibid.*: 55).

In the field of observational methods, Adler and Adler (1987) provided three categories that helped define the membership roles of qualitative researchers. On the basis of their level of access to a research setting, researchers can be categorized as (a) peripheral member researchers, who do not participate in the core activities of group members; (b) active member researchers, who become involved with the central activities of the group without fully committing themselves to the members' values and goals; and (c) complete member researchers, who are already members of the group or who become fully affiliated during the course of the research.

Cameron et al. (1992) conceptualized a similar taxonomy based on the different relationships that might develop between the researcher and the group/community with which s/he works by identifying three research models: 1. ethical research, research on social subjects; 2. advocacy research, a commitment to do research on and for the subjects; 3. empowering research, research on, for and with the subjects. These three fundamental models were integrated by Grinevald (2003) who added a fourth model, that is research "done by speakers of the language community themselves" (2003: 59). Both Adler and Adler's and Cameron et al.'s categories aim to differentiate the insider versus outsider dichotomy.

Traditionally, insider status is considered the preferred approach to qualitative data collection, while outsider status is generally viewed as more problematic (Mullings, 1999). Both statuses have positive and negative aspects. The insider role is considered to allow a more rapid and direct acceptance by participants thus enabling the researcher to gain access to the participants' experiences in greater depth. However, insider status may also have a negative impact on both data collection and analysis in terms of heightened level of researcher subjectivity as well as role confusion, which can negatively influence outcomes

(Asselin, 2003). Conversely, following Fay's (1996) approach, outsider status may facilitate the knowledge-gaining process by providing the adequate distance that allows the researcher: (i) to conceptualize the experience; (ii) to see through all the "overlapping, confusing, ambivalent, mixed, and sometimes contradictory goals, motives, desires, thoughts, and feelings" or indeed the human experience more broadly; (iii) to take a wider perspective and thus appreciate the connections, causality, and influences that characterize a specific experience; (iv) to adopt a more unbiased stance. Difficulties in gaining access both to the community/group that are the object of the study and to the knowledge they possess represent the main drawbacks related to outsider status. These problems may become particularly detrimental in all those cases in which the race, gender, and social class of the researcher are sensitive issues in relation to the socio-cultural composition of the communities in which s/he is conducting their investigation.

The research interview is an interactional event within which the interviewer and the informant are constantly negotiating and constructing their roles and their personalities (De Fina and Perrino, 2011). Indeed, it could be seen as a form of discourse in which both interviewer and respondent position themselves with regard to each other and to the interactional context (Mishler, 1986). Bearing all these issues in mind, I positioned myself in the current study as an outsider of the Gaeltacht community who sought information and knowledge from its members. This approach gave the informants the opportunity to take on an expert status and provide a "critical insight into issues or topics that may be taboo, taken for granted, or otherwise silenced in everyday discourse in an informant's community" (Shuman, 1986; Modan and Shuman, 2011).

In reality, as is often the case in qualitative research, my position vis à vis outsider was not as clear-cut as I myself had perceived it to be at the beginning of the interviewing stage of the study. Dwyer and Buckle (2009: 61) aptly predict this outcome noting that, researchers, in the course of their study, field work and analysis of data, come to occupy the space between a continuum in which insider and outsider status represent the two extremes:

As qualitative researchers we are not separate from the study, with limited contact with our participants. Instead, we are firmly in all aspects of the research process and essential to it. The stories of participants are immediate and real to us; individual voices are not lost in a pool of numbers. We carry these individuals with us as we work with the transcripts. The words, representing experiences, are clear and lasting. We cannot retreat to a distant "researcher" role. Just as our personhood affects the analysis, so, too, the analysis affects our personhood. Within this circle of impact is the space

between. The intimacy of qualitative research no longer allows us to remain true outsiders to the experience under study and, because of our role as researchers, it does not qualify us as complete insiders. We now occupy the space between, with the costs and benefits this status affords.

Moreover, this shift along the insider-outsider continuum also implies a shift in identities and of “the attendant power relations [that] are created and transformed during [...] interviews “ (Mullings, 1999: 337).

In terms of power relations, despite what is generally observed in the discussions on the positionalities of researchers and the participants to their studies (as reported by Mullings, 1999 and Merriam et al., 2001), in the specific situation of my study, I was not in a more powerful position than the participants. Moreover, the majority of the participants in my research did not seem to perceive my lack of knowledge of the Irish language (which was acknowledged to all interviewees) as an impediment to the research process. While clearly being an outsider in terms of my membership status in relation to the interviewees, most of whom were native speakers of Irish who were born and raised in a Gaeltacht area (and I do not speak Irish and was born and raised in Italy), by mentioning my family history and my connection with Ireland (as detailed in §1.1) I mitigated my status as an outsider and became a person who shared part of the knowledge required to understand the identity, linguistic and social issues pertinent to the specific topics that were the objects of the interviews.

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1. *Questionnaire data*

All the answers collected through the completion of the questionnaire by the respondents were scored in order to be able to quantify the data. Since most of the questions were pre-coded, the reduction of the data into numbers was relatively easy.

A basic data array had been previously prepared with values that were to be assigned to each variable. In the case of an unclear response, a missing data item or inconsistent responses, a missing data code (an asterisk) was assigned to the relevant variable. As shown in figure 3.2 above, all the numerical data were then inserted manually onto an Excel Spreadsheet in which each respondent corresponded to a row of cells and

each column of cells corresponded to a particular variable.

The matrix data was prepared using SPSS 17, a powerful software package that provides a wide range of basic and advanced data analysis capabilities. Most graphs and figures were designed through SPSS and Excel (see Appendix F).

3.7.2 Data analysis methodology

The data presented in this chapter were first analyzed in terms of descriptive data (percentages, mean, and standard deviation).

The two scales devoted to attitudes towards the situation and future of the Irish language and to Irish language policies were also analyzed by means of exploratory factor analysis.

Factor analysis is a statistical procedure that is used to reveal and measure latent variables, which are based on groups or clusters of interrelated variables. This allows the researcher to condense numerous intercorrelated variables into fewer dimensions, called factors (Field, 2009).

There are two main types of factor analysis: exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The former is generally used: i) to understand and determine the number of common factors as well as how a set of variables is structured; ii) to design a questionnaire aimed at measuring a latent variable; iii) to reduce a data set to a smaller number of dimensions without losing information. CFA is generally used to test and establish the validity of a construct.

EFA and, more specifically, Principal Component Analysis (PCA), is a covariance analysis between different factors and is generally employed to identify patterns in data and to dimensionalize a complex data set to a simplified structure.

Data extraction by means of PCA determines “the linear components within the data set (the eigenvectors) and eigenvalues” (Field, 2009: 660). The dimensions of the data, i.e. the distribution of the variances of the data matrix, are given by the values of the eigenvalues. Each factor is associated with an eigenvalue, which represents “the variance explained by that particular linear component” (*ibid.*). After assessing the amount of variance explained by the underlying factors, it is important to decide the number of factors to extract. This is generally done by applying the so-called Kaiser’s criterion (Kaiser, 1960) which is based on the retention of eigenvalues greater than 1. One further step is carry out

factor rotation, a technique that will make interpretation easier by ensuring that “variables are loaded maximally to only one factor” (Field, 2009: 642) and, simultaneously, that these loadings are minimized on the other factors.

Loadings range from -1.0 to 1.0 and the higher the value of a loading, the closer the association between an observed variable and a factor. For the purposes of this study loadings $>.50$ or $<-.50$ were considered to be significant values (Pal, 1986).

In the context of this research, the variables are represented by the degree of agreement with various specific attitudinal statements, and the factors are the general underlying attitudes towards the Irish language, and its proclaimed use.

The factors extracted were then used to compute factor scores. There are various methods that can be employed to compute factor scores, they are usually divided into two categories: non-refined and refined methods (DiStefano *et al.*, 2009). The main difference between these two categories lies in the complexity that characterizes the computation of factor scores. While non-refined methods are easier to compute and to interpret, refined computation methods use “more sophisticated and technical approaches [...] and provide estimates that are standardized scores” (*ibid.*, 2009: 2). There are various non-refined and refined computational methods that can be used to compute factor scores. For the purposes of the data analysis of this study, the sum scores by factor was implemented. This method estimates “factor scores for each individual involves summing raw scores corresponding to all items loading on a factor” (*ibid.*, 2009: 2). Negative factor loadings, which are negatively related to the factor, are subtracted in the computations. This method can be used in most exploratory data analysis approaches (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001) and is most desirable in order to retain the variation in the original data.

The factor scores were computed by summing the multiplication of each item with its rotated loading. For instance, the factor score for the ‘Irishness’ dimension obtained from the DON data matrix was computed on the basis of the following equation:

$$\text{IRISHNESS}_{\text{DON}} = (0.594 * \text{IRSITOP1}) - (0.002 * \text{IRSITOP2}) + (0.771 * \text{IRSITOP3}) + (0.693 * \text{IRSITOP4}) + (0.769 * \text{IRSITOP5}) - (0.046 * \text{IRSITOP6}) + (0.087 * \text{IRSITOP7})$$

The computed factor scores and the scales that, after PCA, proved to be one-dimensional were then analyzed by means of either ANOVA or MANOVA.

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), also called the *F* test, is used to compare several means in order to test whether or not the means of different groups differ

significantly. Typically the one-way ANOVA is used when differences among at least three groups are tested. A one-way ANOVA was used to test the impact of three independent variables (gender, age, and education) on one specific dependent variable (EXPECTATIONS AND FEELINGS_{DON}, section 4.6.2).

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) “is used to test the difference between groups across several dependent variables simultaneously” (Field, 2009: 614), i.e. to test how two or more dependent variables interact with one or more independent variables. The first step, before conducting a MANOVA, is to confirm two main assumptions: the assumption of the homogeneity of covariance matrices (by using Box’s test) and the assumption of the homogeneity of variances (by means of Levene’s test). For both tests, the significance level p should exceed 0.05. The second step is to report one of the multivariate test statistics, which provides the F value, the effect size and the observed power. I chose Pillai’s trace since it is regarded as the most robust among the four multivariate test statistics computed when performing a MANOVA especially when there are problems related to unequal numbers or violations of assumptions (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1983). In the case of a significant effect of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variables, I chose to conduct follow-up analyses in order to understand the nature of this effect and I chose to check Scheffe’s post-hoc test to identify pair-wise differences among the groups of the independent variable and also to carry out a non-parametric test. The non-parametric test I chose to conduct was Wilcoxon signed-rank test, which looks for differences between two related samples.

Interviews were first transcribed verbatim and then analysed in order to identify the key substantive points, which were subsequently grouped into categories that reflected in a more loose way those used for the categorization of the data collected through the administration of the questionnaire.

3.8 Fieldwork politics

Both in the case of the pilot study and in the Donegal stage of the research, direct contact with the respondents was kept at a minimum level. The reason for this approach is more easily understood when we consider the influence of the researcher on the completion of questionnaires. As already pointed out in § 2.2, social desirability and other factors may

affect the responses given to the questions included in the questionnaire. Moreover, in the case of the questionnaire employed in the Donegal study, it could also affect the choice between the English and the Irish version. This assumption was confirmed both by the way in which the two versions of the questionnaire were received – indeed, most respondents and all the people who helped me distribute and collect the questionnaires generally reacted favourably to this aspect of the research. They were also usually either flattered and/or positively surprised about the fact that an Italian PhD student had chosen not only Irish but the Donegal variety of Irish for the questionnaire which may also be an indirect judgment on their use of the language in such forums. Even though Irish speakers would always switch to English when they learnt that I did not speak Irish they almost invariably first addressed me in Irish asking me whether I spoke the language. After that, especially in the Gaeltacht areas in Ireland, they usually tried to accommodate more to my lack of knowledge of Irish and either switched to English or translated everything they said in Irish into English in order not to leave me out of the conversation. This included occasions when the aims and reasons of my research were explained in a classroom setting or when I was introduced to potential contacts or respondents. Indeed, this generally occurred whenever discussion was going on in my presence despite the fact that I obviously represented an element of ‘interference’ in their use of the Irish language. Not only I was an ‘outsider’, but also a non-speaker of the language spoken in the community. The difficult balance represented by the insider-outsider relationship in developing a research project of this kind is well defined by Sapsford (1999: 18):

All research involves a paradoxical mix of involvement and detachment. (...) It is the outsider who can best see past local preconception to reframe questions in ‘non-traditional’ ways and whose lack of prior involvement acts as a guarantee of objectivity. (...) However it is the insider who knows what is actually done on the ground (by him or her, at least, even if not more widely), who sees immediate consequences of the actions taken and who has gone beyond the popular level of preconception to something more grounded in practice and personal experience.

3.8.1 *Ethical concerns*

Confidentiality was assured in the front page of the questionnaire and the respondents were kept anonymous *passim*. Pre-tests had ensured that the final version of the questionnaire was not considered to be intrusive and, in compliance with BAAL’s Good

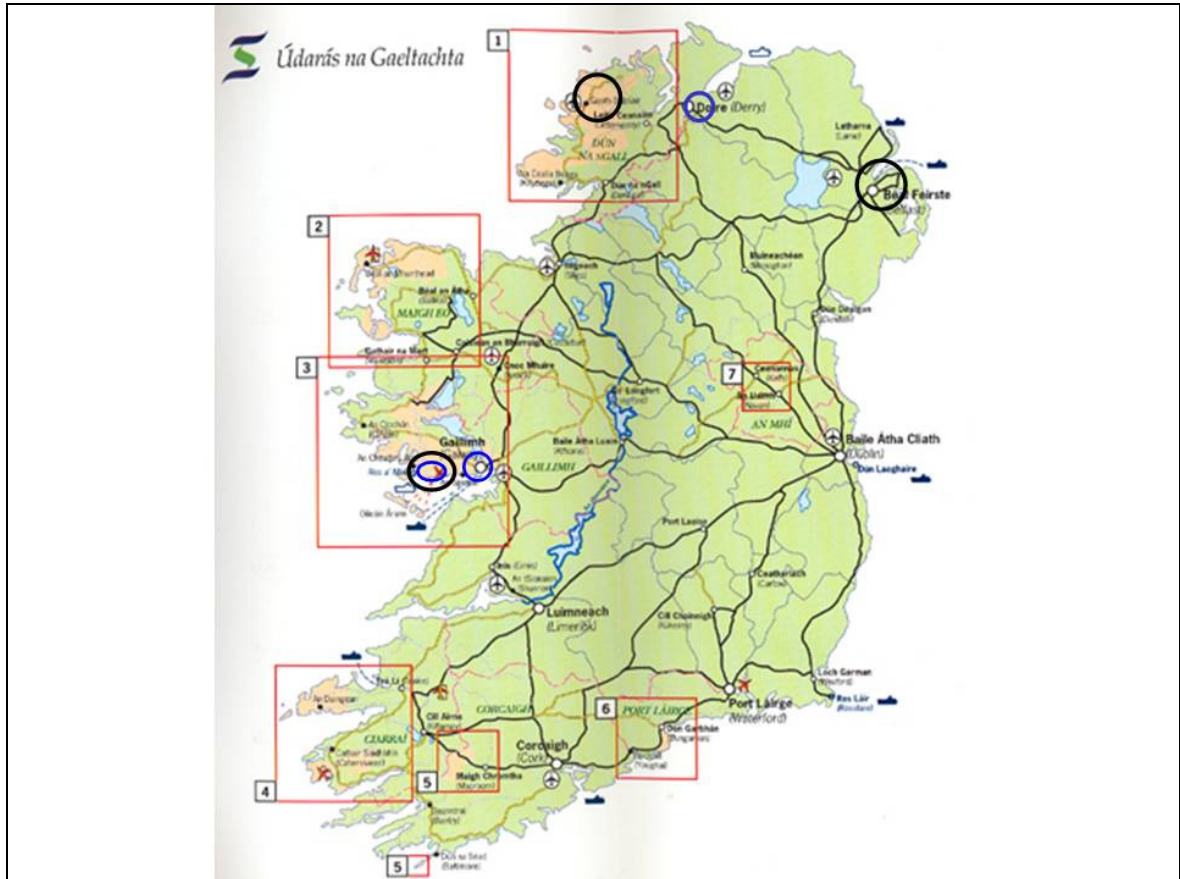
Practice Guide (http://www.baal.org.uk/public_docs.html), informants were always reassured at the outset of their participation that its completion was always consensual and its outcome was not going to be harmful to respondents or other interested parties. Furthermore, great care was taken in avoiding that the conceptualisation of the research and the variables measured and the samples drawn would reinforce any stereotype or distortion to the detriment of respondents or other interested parties.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed description of the methodological instruments used to collect data in the three study areas by means of a questionnaire and interviews and the statistical analysis employed to analyze the data. The samples were selected by using cluster sampling. Although time- and cost-effective, this technique, however, by producing a larger sampling error, might reduce the representativeness of the sample. The questionnaire was distributed in the South Connemara and the Donegal Gaeltacht, and in the Shaw's Road community in Belfast. The interviews were carried out in Galway, Carraroe, and Derry (see figure 3.4 below).

The main problems linked to the use of questionnaires and interviews were mostly based on the social desirability factor which may lead the respondents and the informants to respond in a way that they think might be satisfactory for the researchers. These potential problems were reduced by not administering the questionnaire personally, but by relying on schools, the local *Raidió na Gaeltachta* station, and the local branch of *Údarás na Gaeltachta*. In the case of the interviews, I always positioned myself as an outsider seeking information from local 'experts', that is the informants.

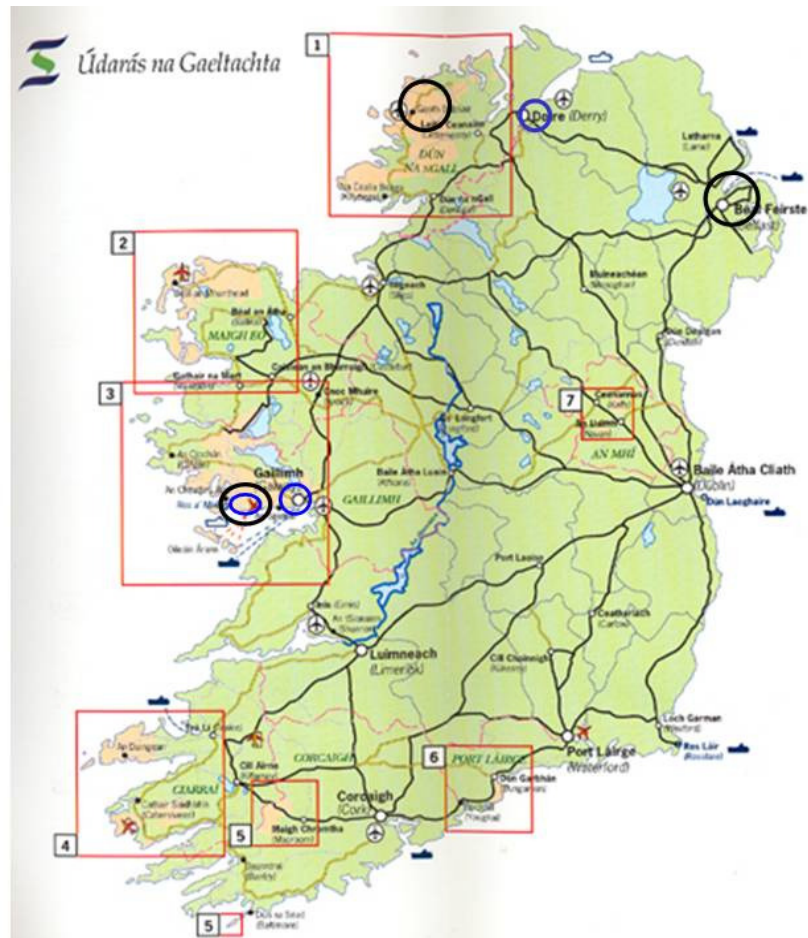
Figure 3.3: Study areas (adapted from <http://www.udaras.ie/>, retrieved 1 October 2007)



The statistical analysis carried out on the data consisted of factor analysis and multivariate analysis.

The following chapter will provide a description of the content of the interviews by including excerpts that will help illustrate the informants' opinions on issues such as Irish in education, language policies, and language use.

Figure 3.3: Study areas (adapted from <http://www.udaras.ie/>, retrieved 1 October 2007)



Chapter 4: Analysis of questionnaire data

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results from the questionnaire distributed and collected in the three study areas taken into consideration for this research project. 4.2 immediately below will provide a description of the socio-economic characteristics of the three sample groups involved. This will be followed by the illustration of the data gathered for each block of the questionnaire followed by the follow-up analysis performed by conducting factor analysis and multivariate analysis of variance. These statistical tools will be utilised to examine attitudes towards the Irish language held by the two main samples (SC and DON), as well as key background information on the sample groups including their use of the Irish language both in the home and community domains.

Both the English and the Irish versions of the questionnaire distributed in the three study areas, contained four attitudinal scales (based on 5-point Likert scales) aimed at assessing:

1. attitudes associated with the desire to have studied less Irish in school (LESSDOP=9 items);
2. attitudes associated with the desire to have studied more Irish in school (MOREDOP=6 items);
3. attitudes towards the future of the language, its maintenance and its role as a symbol of ethnic identity (IRSITOP=7 items);
4. attitudes towards language policies (GOVLOP=12 items);

However, the two scales designed to assess attitudes towards Irish as studied at school (LESSDOP and MOREDOP) were analysed only from a descriptive perspective since most respondents in both the SC (%) and DON (55.1%) samples reported being satisfied with the level and quality of Irish language education they received and skipped this block of the questionnaire. Moreover, all respondents from the PF sample stated that they would have liked to study more Irish.

Language use both in the family and in the community were investigated by analysing the results obtained from responses to the following five sets of items:

- Irish language use with various people (DOMPEOPLE=12 items)
- Irish language use in various places/contexts (DOMPLACE=10 items)
- In the Gaeltacht (GENUSE=8 items)
- Irish language use in the family of origin (USEDHOME=8 items)

- Irish language use in the current family (NOWHOME=6 items)

The multidimensionality of IRSITOP, GOVLOP, and of the other five scales designed to assess Irish language use was measured by performing factor analysis. This allowed for a reduction in the number of variables included in each scale to a smaller set of dimensions. The factor scores thus computed were then used in the follow up multivariate analysis of variance (ANOVA and MANOVA).

The following sections will focus on each scale and set of items and will discuss the percentages related to each individual item as well as the results of reliability, factor, and MANOVA performed on the data collected from the two main samples, SC and DON. Data related to the PF sample will only be discussed in terms of descriptive data. This choice is based on the fact that the PF sample was too small in order to allow for a more complex analysis.

Section 4.2 will provide a description of the socio-demographic characteristics of the three samples. Each following section will present data related to individual blocks of the questionnaire, which were analyzed in terms of descriptive data, and when appropriate, also in terms of factor and univariate and multivariate analyses (ANOVA and MANOVA) that were carried out with the statistical package SPSS 17 on the DON and SC data matrices.

4.2 Sample description

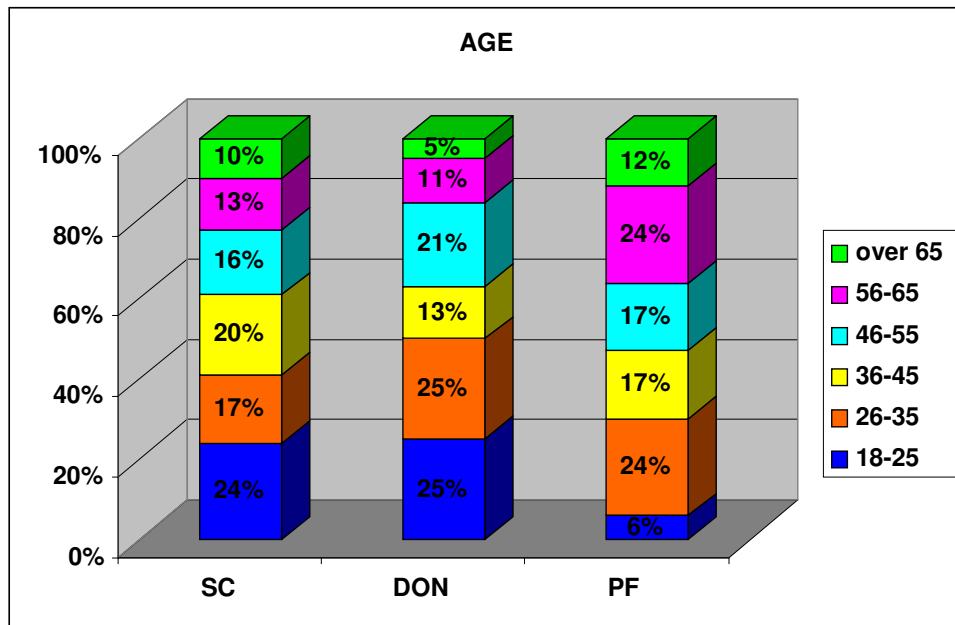
The three samples were made up respectively of 146 respondents in the South Connemara Gaeltacht, 148 in the Donegal Gaeltacht in the Republic of Ireland, and 17 in the Shaw's Road community in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The block containing questions aimed at obtaining information regarding the socio-demographic situation of the respondents was inserted at the end of the questionnaire. Questions on age, sex and education introduced pre-coded answers, while the question relating to occupation was open-ended and all answers classified on the basis of a pre-determined set of occupational categories.

In both the SC and the DON samples, males and females were almost equally represented (respectively, they represent 48.6% and 51.4% of the SC sample, and 50.3% and 49.7% of the DON sample) while in Belfast, the number of male respondents was higher (59%). Respondents were invited to select the age group they belonged to from six age categories included under the relevant question on age. As can be seen in figure 4.1 (coupled with the fact that questionnaires were also distributed in schools) in the SC

and DON samples the 18-25 age group is slightly over-represented with respectively 24% and 25% of the total. Although there is no marked discrepancy between the PF sample and the other two regarding the 36-45 and the 46-55 age clusters, the over 65 and the 26-35 groups are slightly more numerous while the 18-25 is much smaller. It is important to note, in this regard, that the PF sample is represented by the people who live in the Shaw's Road community, and who accepted to complete the questionnaire when I contacted them.

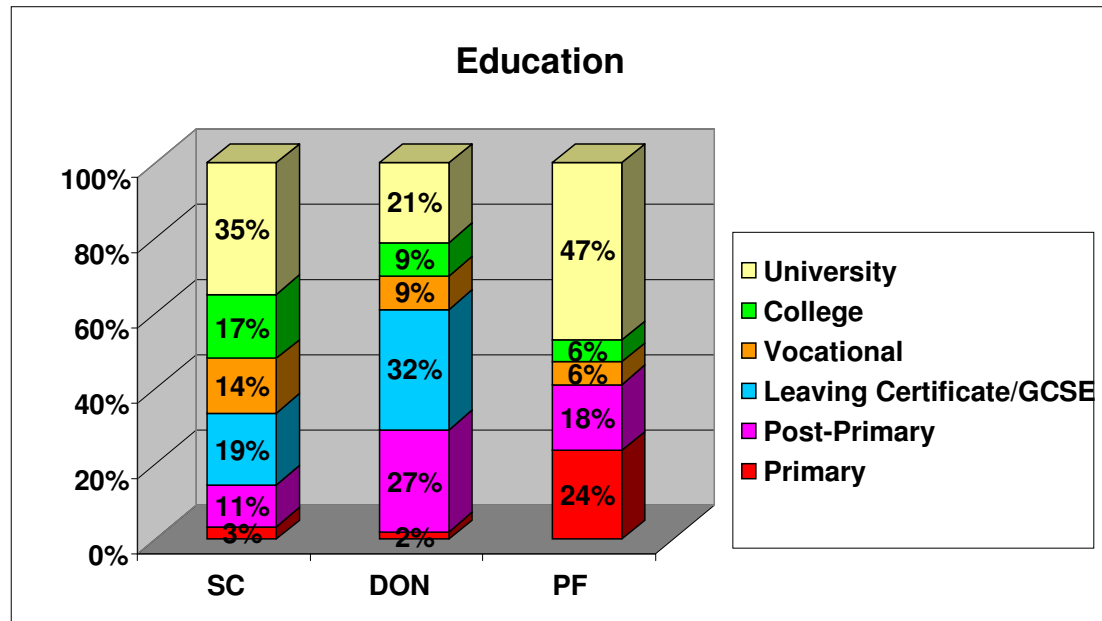
Figure 4.1: The age variable for the three samples



Six levels of education were included in the questionnaire (see figure 4.2 below): Primary, Post-Primary, Leaving Certificate/GCSE, Vocational School, College and University, in order to get general information on the educational level of respondents. These categories were selected on the basis of the taxonomy provided by Ó Riagáin (1992), which is based on the 1973 CILAR survey and the 1983 and 1993 surveys carried out by *ITÉ*.

Overall educational levels of the selected sample are high with 85% (SC), 71% (DON), and 59% (PF) of respondents with at least a Leaving Certificate or a UK GCE, the main discrepancy being the percentages of respondents with a university degree.

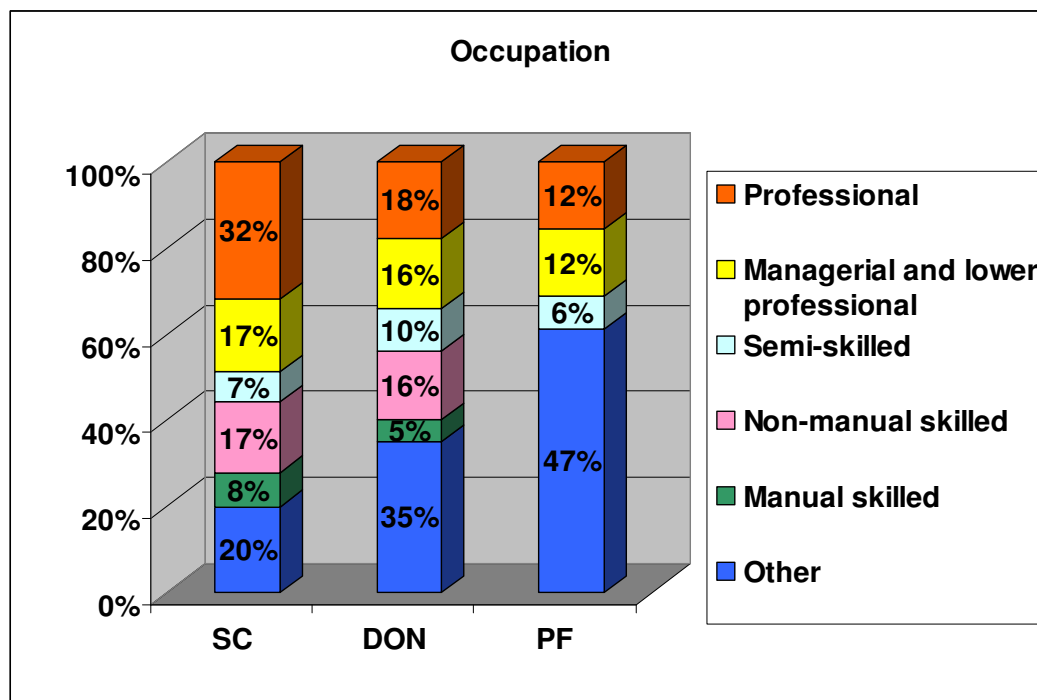
Figure 4.2: Levels of education for the three samples



As shown in figure 4.3 below, the work-related setting comprised six occupational categories defined by constructing a code aimed at classifying the occupation reported by each respondent. The UK Registrar General's six-fold classification of occupations was considered to represent more correctly the population it was being used to classify (The Office for National Statistics, 2010). According to this system, class one includes professional occupations such as doctors, lawyers and clergy. Class two embraces managerial and lower professional occupations, e.g. managers, teachers, and farm owners. Class three comprises, for instance, non-manual skilled occupations, including office workers, police officers, and shop assistants. Class four includes manual skilled occupations, which include bricklayers, factory workers, and farmers. Class five embraces semi-skilled occupations, like for instance postal workers. A sixth category, 'Other' was added in order to include all the respondents who at the time of the survey were either unemployed or employed on a less regular basis (e.g. students working seasonally to finance their studies, or people doing the odd job).

In terms of percentages, while in all three samples the Managerial and lower professionals, and the semi-skilled categories do not differ much, the main differences are represented by the Other category and by the absence of the Non-manual skilled category in the PF sample.

Figure 4.3: The occupation variable for the three samples

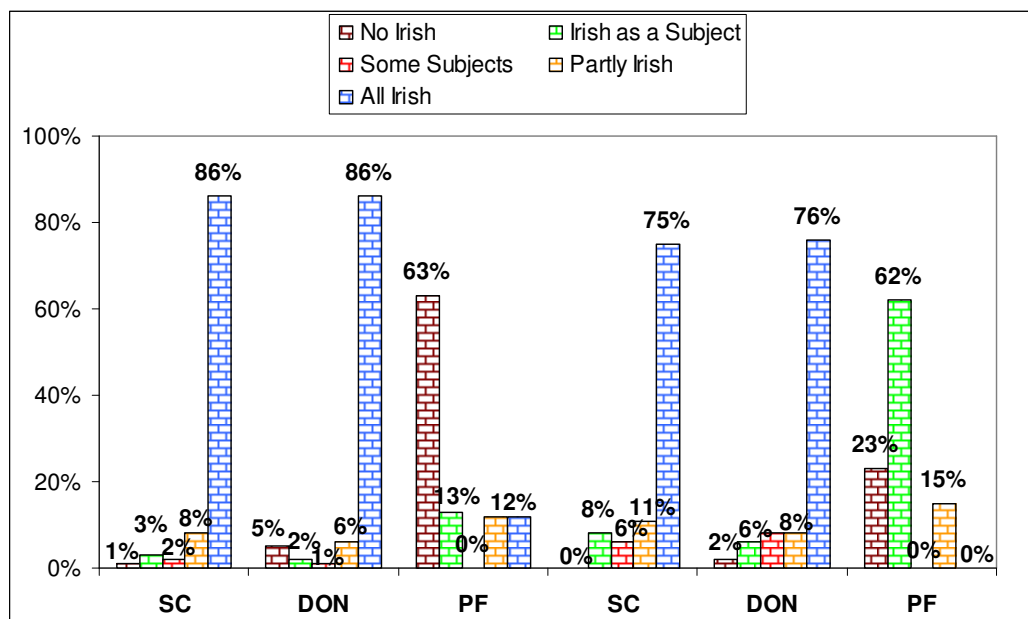


4.3 Irish as experienced in school

The first question that the respondents were asked to answer was related to the 'amount' of Irish studied at both Primary and Post-Primary school by choosing an item on a scale of five possibilities: All Irish; Partly Irish; Some subjects through Irish; Irish as a school subject only; No Irish at all, with the highest score (+5) given to All Irish and the lowest (+1) to No Irish at all.

The graph in figure 4.4 shows that a large majority of respondents in both SC and DON reported studying in an all-Irish medium Primary and Post-Primary school. Therefore it can be assumed that most respondents attended Primary and Post-Primary education in these two Gaeltacht areas, and that their socialization in the school medium took place in Irish. In the PF sample, on the contrary, respondents reported the opposite trend with 62% who studied no Irish at all in primary school and 63% who studied Irish as a school subject only. This strong difference can be explained by the fact that most of the people who accepted to complete the questionnaire in the Shaw's Road community were the first generation of founders, that is, people who had learnt Irish as a second language and in a voluntary manner within a community rather than an educational context.

Figure 4.4: Amount of Irish studied at primary and post-primary level



The question that followed was related to one of the main issues dealt with in the study, i.e. whether respondents would rather have studied less Irish, more Irish or were satisfied with the amount of Irish they had studied in school. According to the answer given to the question ‘Would you have rather studied less or more Irish in school’ (table 4.1 below), respondents were then asked to rate their level of agreement with the items contained in two scales named LESSDOP and MOREDOP. Very few respondents from the SC and the DON samples (16 and 13, respectively) and none of the respondents from the PF sample chose the option ‘Less Irish’. The second option ‘I am satisfied with the amount of Irish studied at school’ was chosen by 81 respondents in both SC and DON, and by all the respondents from the PF sample, while 49 (SC) and 53 (DON) respondents stated that they would have liked to study ‘More Irish’. The respondents from the PF sample did not choose this option, however, eventually completing the ‘More Irish’ section instead.

Table 4.1: Level of satisfaction with the amount of Irish studied at school

Would you rather have studied:	SC (% / N)	DON (% / N)	PF (% / N)
<i>Less Irish</i>	11% (16)	9% (13)	---
<i>More Irish</i>	34% (49)	36% (53)	---
<i>What we did in school was satisfactory</i>	56% (81)	55% (81)	100% (17)

4.3.1 *Less Irish*

This set of attitudinal items included nine statements which expressed negative opinions offered as reasons to justify the position of the respondents who chose the option 'Less Irish'.

The four main issues that were dealt with by this set focussed on Irish as a symbol of cultural identity and as a potential obstacle to proficiency in other school subjects and progress at school; but also on attitudes towards the usefulness of Irish while at school and after school, and in finding a good job.

Seven out of the nine items included in this section, were divided into two summated scales. Summated scales are usually built from individual items that describe the same issue, with the aim of analysing collectively the results of the items they contain. Moreover, all the codes attributed to the 5-point Likert scale used for this section were reversed in order to be able to compare and use the point values in the two summated scales. The summated results were then represented with a graph displaying cumulative percentages.

The first scale 'Irish seen as an obstacle to proficiency in other subjects' represents the cumulative percentages of the various scores obtained from each respondent in relation to the first three items of the LESSDOP scale.

Table 4.2: Irish seen as an obstacle to proficiency in other subjects (percentages)

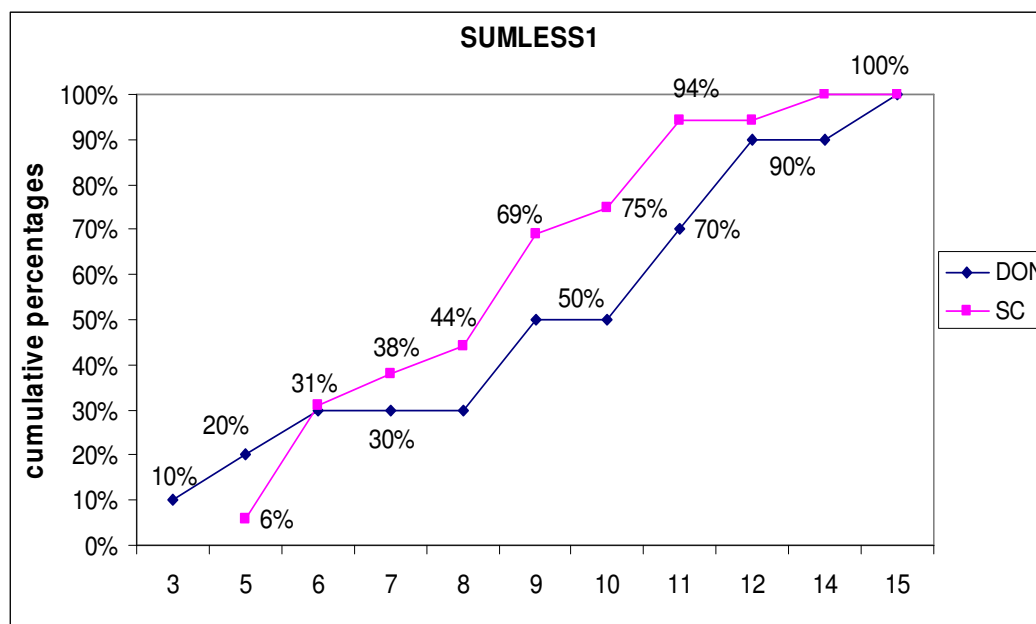
LESSDOP1 - <i>Learning Irish in school took time from other subjects</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	6.3	37.5	18.8	31.3	6.3	SC (N:16)
	27.3	18.2	27.3	18.2	9.1	DON (N:11)
LESSDOP2 - <i>It would have been more useful to study other subjects instead of Irish</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	18.8	43.8	6.3	18.8	12.5	SC (N:16)
	16.7	25	33.3	8.3	16.7	DON (N:12)
LESSDOP3 - <i>Learning two languages simultaneously can hinder progress at school</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	6.2	0	12.5	62.5	18.8	SC (N:16)
	25	33.3	16.7	8.3	16.7	DON (N:12)

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree

The figures in table 4.2 show that there are a few differences of opinion with regard to the responses given to two of the three items. While a high percentage of the respondents from both SC (63%) and DON (42%) disagreed that it would have been more useful to study other subjects instead of Irish, one third of the eleven DON respondents who chose to answer the questions in the LESSDOP section preferred to take a more neutral stance (63% of respondents). A more striking difference emerged

from level of agreement expressed in relation to the third item. 81% of SC respondents agreed with the fact that learning two languages simultaneously can hinder progress at school while 58% of the DON sample is of the opposite opinion.

Figure 4.5: Index on Irish seen as an obstacle to proficiency in other subjects



The summated scale in figure 4.5 above shows how the level of (dis)agreement is distributed for both samples. Since the score assigned to the statements of this subsection ranged from 1 for answers that supported negative attitudes towards Irish to 5 for answers which did not support a negative statement, the score of this index, which comprises three statements, ranged from 3 in the case of responses supporting all three negative items, to 15 when no support was given to the negative attitudinal statements contained in the index. The graph clearly highlights the fact that, as compared to the responses given by the DON sample, which are more evenly distributed, those given by the SC respondents tend to endorse a higher level of agreement with the negative items.

The second subscale contained four attitudinal statements related to the usefulness of Irish as studied in school with respect to subsequently finding a job.

Table 4.3: The usefulness of Irish in finding a job (percentages)

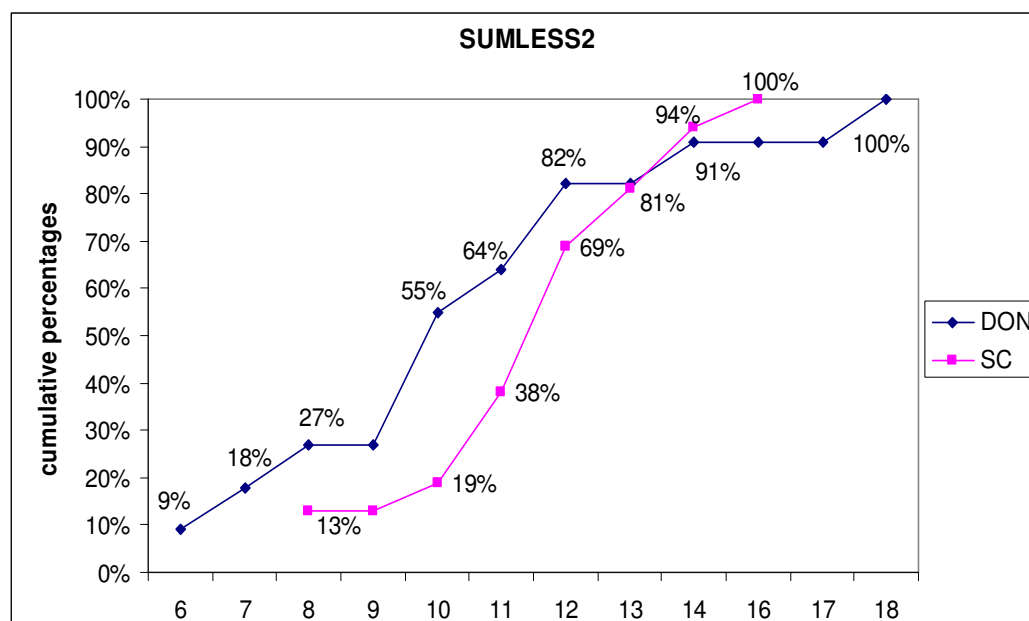
LESSDOP4 <i>Children seldom learn enough Irish to be able to use it after school</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	6.3	37.5	0	31.3	25	SC (N:16)
	16.7	16.7	8.3	50	8.3	DON (N:12)
LESSDOP5 <i>You do not need to know Irish to find a good job</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	25	50	12.5	12.5	0	SC (N:16)
	0	23.1	15.4	30.8	30.8	DON (N:13)
LESSDOP6 <i>The Irish language is not suitable for modern society</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	6.3	18.8	6.3	37.5	31.3	SC (N:16)
	23.1	38.5	23.1	7.7	7.7	DON (N:13)

LESSDOP7 <i>Irish is less useful than any other European language</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	6.3	37.5	18.8	18.8	18.8	SC (N:16)
	0	27.3	9.1	36.4	27.3	DON (N:11)

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree

In this case (as shown in table 4.3 above) it was possible to ascertain that the respondents from both SC and DON were almost equally divided in their level of agreement and disagreement with the fact that the amount of Irish learnt at school is insufficient in order to be able to use it as a working language after completion of secondary education. Moreover, when it came to expressing their agreement with the other three items, the two samples were again divided in their opinion. 75% of SC respondents believe that Irish is useful in finding a good job while 61% of DON respondents share the opposite view. With regard to whether or not Irish is suitable for modern society, it is the DON sample that registered most disagreement with this statement (62%), whereas the SC sample actually supported it almost as strongly (70%). The responses given to the item expressing the idea that Irish is less useful than other European languages show that 44% of these same respondents believed that it is not less useful while 64% of DON respondents believed that the opposite was true.

Figure 4.6: Index on the usefulness of Irish in finding a job



The summated scale for this subscale shows that neither the minimum score of strong disagreement (4) nor the maximum level of agreement (20) were recorded by the SC sample. In fact, the index ranges from 8 to just 16. Moreover, values tend to be centred around middle values thus indicating either a neutral or milder stance in relation

to the usefulness of Irish in finding a job. Results for DON respondents point towards a wider distribution of scores, which also however revealed a tendency to disagree with these negative items.

The percentages for the last two statements in table 4.4 below, allows us to gain insights regarding the respondents' attitudes towards two other aspects of Irish in educational settings: (i) Irish as a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity, and (ii) whether respondents felt positively or negatively about their experiences of studying Irish.

Table 4.4: Attitudes and feelings towards studying Irish (percentages)

LESSDOP8 <i>I do not need to study and know Irish to understand and perpetuate Irish culture and traditions</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	12.5	31.3	12.5	12.5	31.3	SC (N:16)
	15.4	30.8	7.7	23.1	23.1	DON (N:13)
LESSDOP9 <i>I resented having to study Irish/in Irish</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	6.3	25	6.3	18.8	43.8	SC (N:16)
	23.1	30.8	15.4	23.1	7.7	DON (N:13)

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree

While expressing more or less the same level of agreement and disagreement with respect to LESSDOP8, the responses from the two samples differ when it comes to expressing their opinion with regard to LESSDOP9. Thus, 63% of SC respondents expressed resentment towards having to study Irish in school and 54% of DON respondents held the opposite opinion.

4.3.2 More Irish

The second sub-section ('More Irish') focussed on attitudes surrounding the desire of having had the possibility of studying more Irish in school. The six relevant statements included in this set of attitudinal items (see table 4.5 below) aimed at exploring attitudes towards two main themes:

1. the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job
2. Irish as a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity

Forty-nine respondents, 34% of the total SC sample, and 53 from the DON sample (36%) chose this option when asked to express their opinion with regard to the amount of Irish studied in school. As for the PF sample, even though none of the respondents chose to answer that they would have liked to study more Irish, they did choose to answer the first four statements (MOREDOP1-MOREDOP4). From the analysis of all the responses given, irrespective of where the sample is drawn from, a clear feature immediately emerged, i.e. a large majority of respondents from all three

samples expressed a very strong agreement with all the statements contained in this scale.

The first theme was aimed at exploring attitudes towards the usefulness of Irish both at school and with respect to subsequent career opportunities and the four items related to this topic were subsequently summated in a sub-scale. However, since respondents from the PF study area chose to answer items MOREDOP 1 to 4, a separate summated scale was created for their responses.

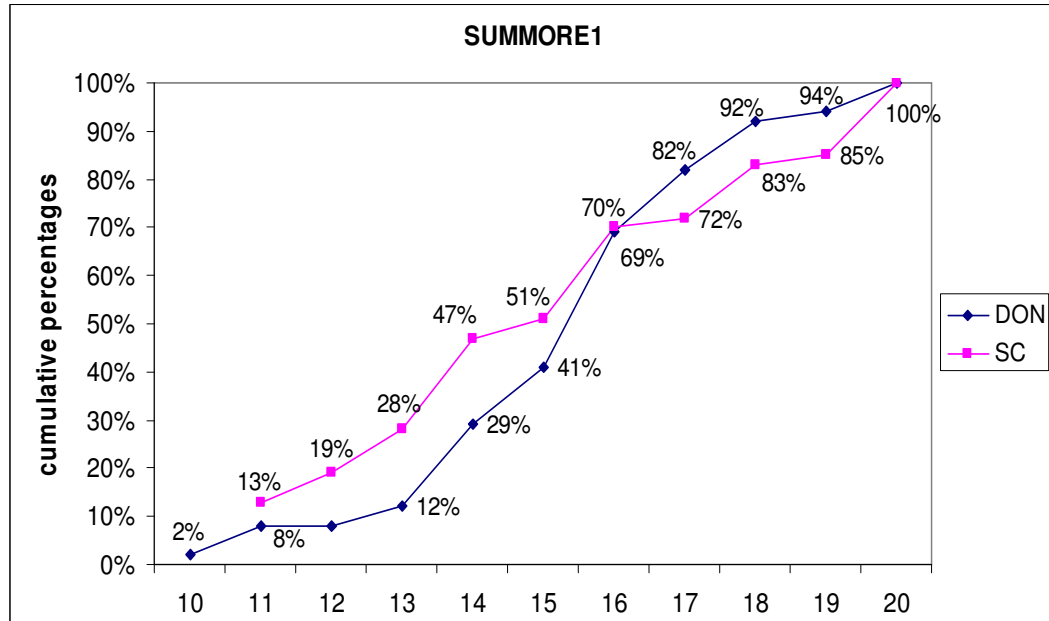
Table 4.5: Usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job (percentages)

MOREDOP1 <i>The knowledge of Irish becomes useful when studying other languages</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	0	2.1	6.3	62.5	29.2	SC (N:48)
	1.9	9.4	11.3	54.7	22.6	DON (N:53)
	0	0	0	53.3	46.7	PF (N:15)
MOREDOP2 <i>Studying Irish helped me/will help me go on with my studies</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	0	6.4	14.9	53.2	25.5	SC (N:47)
	0	1.9	15.4	61.5	21.2	DON (N:52)
	0	0	13.3	33.3	53.3	PF (N:15)
MOREDOP4 <i>People who know Irish well have a better chance of getting good jobs and promotions in the Gaeltacht</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	0	8.3	27.1	27.1	37.5	SC (N:48)
	0	7.5	5.7	43.4	43.4	DON (N:53)
	6.3	6.3	6.3	50	31.3	PF (N:16)
MOREDOP5 <i>People who know Irish well have a better chance of getting good jobs and promotions outside the Gaeltacht</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	10.4	25	14.6	27.1	22.9	SC (N:48)
	0	19.2	26.9	38.5	15.4	DON (N:52)
	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	PF

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree

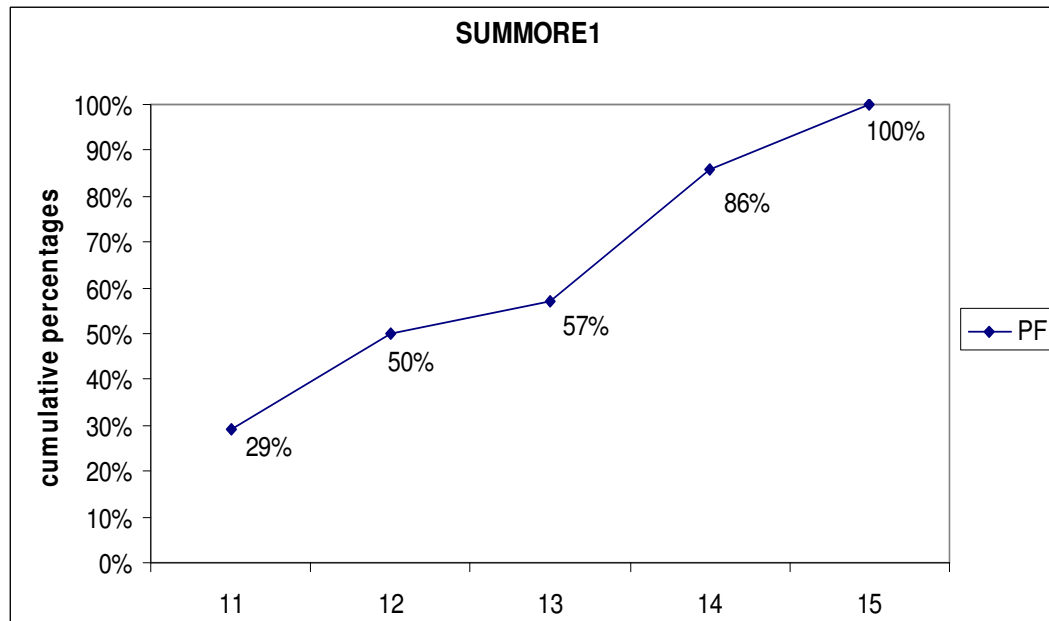
The percentages in table 4.5 show how strong the endorsement by the majority of respondents from all three study areas was for these four attitudinal statements in favour of Irish. The only exception is the 35% of disagreement expressed by the SC sample with regard to Irish as an instrument for improving job opportunities both within and outside of the Gaeltacht. The graphic representation of the summated scale in figure 4.7 confirms the strong agreement expressed in support of the items it contains by showing that there are very few values below 12 and that cumulative percentages tend to be concentrated on the right of value 12 thus conveying the level of agreement indicated by the SC and DON samples (this subscale summates 4 items therefore the minimum and maximum values equal respectively 4 and 20).

Figure 4.7: Index of the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job



The summated scale created for the PF sample with items MOREDOP1-3 (figure 4.8) shows a similar pattern with an even stronger endorsement for this sub-scale and no values expressing any form of disagreement.

Figure 4.8: Index of the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job according to the PF sample



The other two items included in this scale, MOREDOP3 and MOREDOP6, explored attitudes towards the obligation for all children to study Irish as a subject and towards Irish as a symbol of cultural identity.

Table 4.6: Irish as a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity (percentages)

MOREDOP3 <i>All children should be required to learn Irish as a subject in school</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	0	4.2	4.2	43.8	47.9	SC (N:48)
	0	3.8	1.9	26.4	67.9	DON (N:53)
	0	6.3	6.3	37.5	50	PF (N:16)
MOREDOP6 <i>To be able to understand better Ireland's culture and traditions one must study and learn Irish</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	
	0	10.2	12.2	36.7	40.8	SC (N:49)
	0	5.7	7.5	49.1	37.7	DON (N:53)
	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	PF

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree

As the percentages in table 4.6 show, the level of agreement expressed by the three samples is once again very strong with percentages indicating high levels of strong agreement for both items on behalf of SC and DON for both items and by PF for MOREDOP3, while PF did not provide a response for MOREDOP6.

The block containing questions and items on Irish in education ended with the following statement which required the respondents to rate their (dis)like in relation to Irish while they were in school:

While in school the way I felt about Irish was

Strongly in favour In favour No opinion Not in favour Strongly not in favour

The analysis of the responses (detailed in table 4.7) shows that the majority of respondents from all three samples did not have negative feelings about Irish when in school with the highest level of dislike (though still low compared to the other values) expressed by the PF sample.

Table 4.7: Level of (dis)like to Irish while in school

	SC (146)	DON (143)	PF (16)
Strongly in favour	45%	47%	44%
In favour	38%	34%	25%
No opinion	11%	17%	19%
Not in favour	6%	1%	0%
Strongly not in favour	0%	1%	12%

The results presented in this section show how the respondents in all three samples expressed strong attitudes and positive feelings towards Irish in education.

These findings are in line with other studies on Irish language attitudes (CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984, 1994; MacGréil and Rhatigan, 2009),

4.5 General attitudinal statements on the Irish language

The seven attitudinal statements contained in this block were related to two general and highly contentious issues related to the Irish language: the future of Irish and Irish as a symbol of identity.

All seven statements expressed general views and opinions on the Irish language, however the aspects they dealt with are also highly emotional, in the sense that they are extremely controversial and they relate to delicate issues that have been debated for decades in Ireland (both north and south). Thus, the aim of this section was to provoke a strong reaction on behalf of the respondents in order to determine their position with regard to these two fundamental aspects of the Irish question.

The descriptive values for the items in table 4.8 below illustrate the opinions held and shared by all three samples in relation to both positive and negative statements on the maintenance and the future of the Irish language, as well as giving a general idea of the identity issue.

Table 4.8: Frequencies for IRSITOP

IRSITOP1 <i>The maintenance of Irish is the most important of all matters for my community</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std
SC (N:145)	0	12.4	17.9	46.2	23.4	3.81	.938
DON (N:148)	0	6.8	14.2	39.2	39.9	4.12	0.895
PF (N:16)	0	6.3	6.3	56.3	31.3	4.13	.806
IRSITOP2 <i>The Irish language is dying</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std
SC (N:146)	1.4	16.4	10.3	52.1	19.9	3.73	1.007
DON (N:147)	5.4	21.8	4.1	49.7	19	3.55	1.183
PF (N:16)	68.8	25	6.3	0	0	1.38	.619
IRSITOP3 <i>If the Irish language dies out, the Gaeltacht will die out too</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std
SC (N:146)	0.7	11	3.4	45.2	39.7	4.12	.961
DON (N:147)	2	12.9	10.2	44.2	30.6	3.88	1.050
PF (N:16)	6.3	31.3	12.5	31.3	18.8	3.25	1.291
IRSITOP4 <i>Without Irish Ireland would certainly lose its identity</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std
SC (N:146)	0.7	6.2	4.8	43.2	45.2	4.26	.863
DON (N:147)	1.4	11.6	7.5	36.1	43.5	4.09	1.046
PF (N:15)	13.3	20	13.3	26.7	26.7	3.33	1.447
IRSITOP5 <i>No real Irish person can be against the survival of Irish</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std

SC (N:146)	2.1	4.1	8.2	47.3	38.4	4.16	.892
DON (N:148)	0.7	4.7	8.8	34.5	51.4	4.31	0.872
PF (N:16)	6.3	0	0	62.5	31.3	4.13	.957
IRSITOP6 <i>Most people are not concerned about the future of the Irish language</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std
SC (N:146)	4.1	19.9	14.4	51.4	10.3	3.44	1.050
DON (N:148)	2	24.7	9.6	51.4	12.3	3.47	1.058
PF (N:16)	0	50	12.5	37.5	0	2.88	.957
IRSITOP7 <i>Most young people see all things associated with Irish as too outdated</i>	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Mean	Std
SC (N:145)	9.7	26.9	10.3	50.3	2.8	3.10	1.126
DON (N:148)	4.1	31.8	10.1	45.3	8.8	3.23	1.113
PF (N:16)	18.8	56.3	6.3	18.8	0	2.25	1.000

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree (%)

As the percentages and mean rates show, the four attitudinal items on Irish as a symbol of identity (IRSITOP1, 3, 4, and 5) obtained strong support from all three samples, with high levels of agreement, which range from 60% to more than 90%. The majority of respondents for SC, DON and PF thus stated that the maintenance of Irish is fundamental for their communities, that the survival of the Gaeltacht and of Ireland's identity depends on the survival of Irish, and, finally, that no true Irish person can be against the survival of this language.

The contrasting responses given to the other three items of this scale expressing opinions related to the present and future situation of Irish show that in this case it is the PF sample that differs in its attitudes as compared to the other two in which respondents share a more negative outlook on the survival prospects of Irish. More specifically, while 61.7% of the SC sample and 68.7% of DON agree that the Irish language is dying, 93.8% of PF respondents purport the opposite opinion. Moreover, DON and SC are also fairly pessimistic in relation to most people's concern with the future of Irish and with how young people regard the language (seeing it as too outdated e.g.), while once again the PF sample holds a more positive attitude. In the case of these three statements it is certainly worth mentioning that the more positive attitudes and stronger support expressed by the PF sample are very likely to be influenced by the differing political and social circumstances that characterise Northern Ireland's history which have been explored in more detail in §1.3.2 and 1.4.1 .

4.5.1 Factor analysis of the IRSITOP scale

In order to identify the dimensions underlying the respondents' opinions on the attitudinal statements, a factor analysis was conducted on this scale.

The factor analysis (PCA) conducted on the seven items contained in this scale with varimax rotation identified two main components for the DON sample and three main components for the SC sample. As can be seen in table 4.9 below, the data adequacy was tested by means of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO indicator varies from 0 to +1 and the closer the indicator is to 1 the higher the adequacy of the data. KMO for DON and SC equalled respectively .654 and .534 so they can be considered acceptable (as summarised in table 4.9). The chi-square value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is 132.263 for DON and 123.617 for SC, while a significance value of Sig.= .000 indicates that there are significant relationships among the variables and that the data obtained from the responses given to this scale is suitable for factor analysis.

Table 4.9: KMO and Bartlett's Test for DON and SC

		DON	SC
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.654	.534
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	132.263	123.617
	df	21	21
	Sig.	.000	.000

The eigenvalues obtained with the initial analysis, and illustrated in table 4.10 below, show that 2 components with eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1, which in combination accounted for almost 53% of the total variance, emerged from the analysis of the DON results; while the analysis for SC obtained 3 components which in combination explained 64% of the variance and again with eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1.

The factor analysis conducted on the two samples allowed the extraction of two factors with factor loadings over .50. The first factor appears to capture a dimension linked to language and identity and was thus named IRISHNESS (with positive loadings greater than .5), while for the second factor (FUTURE) statements related to the future of the Irish language all had high positive loadings > .7. Table 4.9 shows the factor loadings after rotation.

Table 4.10: Factors extracted for IRSITOP¹

	Factors (DON, N=143)			Factors (SC, N=145)	
	IRISHNES S	NEGATIVE OUTLOOK		IRISHN ESS	NEGATIVE OUTLOOK
<i>No real Irish person can be against the survival of Irish (IRSITOP 5)</i>	.77	.08		.82	.004
<i>If the Irish language dies out, the Gaeltacht will die out too (IRSITOP3)</i>	.71	.001		.60	.04
<i>Without Irish Ireland would certainly lose its identity (IRSITOP4)</i>	.69	.02		.80	-.02
<i>The maintenance of Irish is the most important of all matters for my community (IRSITOP1)</i>	.59	-.05		.03	.05
<i>Most young people see all things associated with Irish as too out-dated (IRSITOP7)</i>	.09	.83		-.15	.77
<i>Most people are not concerned about the future of the Irish language (IRSITOP6)</i>	-.05	.76		.01	.80
<i>The Irish language is dying (IRSITOP2)</i>	-.002	.70		.17	.65
Eigenvalues	1.97	1.73		1.82	1.65
% of variance	28.20	24.71		25.94	23.59
Alpha²	.65	.64		.61	.59

Reliability was assessed by using Cronbach's alpha, which measures the internal consistency of a set of items (or variables) and its reliability coefficient is based on the formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where N equals the number of items, c-bar corresponds to the average inter-item covariance among the items and v-bar is equal to the average variance (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). Generally, alpha ranges between 0 and 1 and the closer the value of Cronbach's alpha is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. Moreover, the greater the number of items in the scale, the higher the value α will be.

¹ Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 3 iterations for DON and 4 iterations for SC.

² The internal consistency of the NEGATIVE OUTLOOK subscales for SC was calculated by excluding the item *The maintenance of Irish is the most important of all matters for my community* which was not part of this subscale.

While there is no general agreement with regard to the cut-off value for Cronbach's alpha, the tendency is to place it at $>.7$ (George and Mallery, 2003) or $>.8$ (Field, 2009). However, these guidelines should be used with caution since high values of alpha are likely to depend also on the number of items in the scale. Moreover, as Gliem and Gliem point out “it should also be noted that while a high value for Cronbach’s alpha indicates good internal consistency of the items in the scale, it does not mean that the scale is unidimensional” (2003: 87). When the data have a multidimensional structure, then α should be applied separately to each factor/subscale (Field, 2009).

As can be seen in table 4.10, Cronbach’s alpha for IRISHNESS is adequate for both DON and SC, while alpha values for NEGATIVE OUTLOOK are sufficient for DON and borderline for SC.

A comparison between the results extracted with the factor analysis conducted on the data collected from the two samples revealed that the two subscales, NEGATIVE OUTLOOK and IRISHNESS, vary in terms of one attitudinal item (*The maintenance of Irish is the most important of all matters for my community*). The analysis for SC showed that the language maintenance factor is more relevant for this sample than for DON. Therefore, while both samples share the same strong support to Irish as a symbol of identity and to what they believe is the future of the language, the maintenance factor is a more dominant and distinctive element for the SC sample.

An ANOVA with gender, age, and education was performed on this single item on both the SC and the DON datasets in order to ascertain whether this difference could be explained in terms of a different impact of socio-demographic variables. The analysis of variance revealed that while there were no significant values for DON, values for SC indicate that with $p=.000$, the difference is age-related. Moreover, the post-hoc test revealed three pair-wise differences between the 46-55 and other three age groups of the SC sample (18-25 vs. 46-55, 36-45 vs. 46-55, and 46-55 vs. over 65).

4.5.2 The influence of socio-demographic variables on general attitude subscales

The PCA performed on the scale designed to measure general attitudes towards the situation, maintenance and future of the Irish language allowed me to extract two factors for each sample. The factor scores that were then computed by summing the multiplication of each item with its rotated loading allowing save two variables that constitute two underlying attitudinal dimensions to be saved, namely, ‘Irishness’ and

Identity'³. By means of MANOVA, the effect of three independent variables, gender, age, and education on the two factors extracted from the DON and SC was then tested. The effect of a fourth dependent variable, that is the language in which the questionnaire was written, was also assessed for the DON sample.

The distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic factors for 'Irishness' and 'Negative outlook' is displayed in table 4.11:

Table 4.11: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for 'Irishness' and 'Negative outlook'

Gender	SC	DON
Female	N= 75	N= 67
Male	N= 70	N= 71
Age	SC	DON
18-25	N= 34	N= 36
26-35	N= 25	N= 35
36-45	N= 29	N= 20
46-55	N= 23	N= 29
56-65	N= 20	N= 15
>65	N= 14	N= 7
Education	SC	DON
Primary	N= 6	N= 2
Post-primary	N= 16	N= 46
Leaving certificate	N= 26	N= 45
Vocational training	N= 21	N= 11
College	N= 25	N= 10
University	N= 51	N= 24
Version	DON	
Irish	N= 81	
English	N= 62	

The analysis testing the influence of gender on IRISHNESS_{DON} and FUTURE_{DON} showed that with $p>0.05$ ($=0.65$) the result of Box's M test for the DON sample was not significant; therefore there was no violation of the assumption of the

$$\begin{aligned}
 {}^3\text{IRISHNESS}_{\text{SC}} &= (0.034*\text{IRSITOP1})+(0.170*\text{IRSITOP2})+(0.595*\text{IRSITOP3})+ \\
 & (0.803*\text{IRSITOP4})+(0.818*\text{IRSITOP5})-(0.012*\text{IRSITOP6})-(0.145*\text{IRSITOP7}) \\
 \text{NEGATIVE OUTLOOK}_{\text{SC}} &= (0.046*\text{IRSITOP1})+ (0.650*\text{IRSITOP2})+ \\
 & (0.043*\text{IRSITOP3})-(0.019*\text{IRSITOP4})+(0.005*\text{IRSITOP5})+(0.801*\text{IRSITOP6})+ \\
 & (0.769*\text{IRSITOP7}) \\
 \text{IDENTITY}_{\text{DON}} &= (- \\
 & 0.050*\text{IRSITOP1})+(0.704*\text{IRSITOP2})+(0.002*\text{IRSITOP3})+(0.024*\text{IRSITOP4})+ \\
 & (0.077*\text{IRSITOP5})+(0.759*\text{IRSITOP6})+(0.826*\text{IRSITOP7}) \\
 \text{NEGATIVE OUTLOOK}_{\text{DON}} &= (0.594*\text{IRSITOP1})-(0.002*\text{IRSITOP2})+ \\
 & (0.771*\text{IRSITOP3})+(0.693*\text{IRSITOP4})+(0.769*\text{IRSITOP5})- \\
 & (0.046*\text{IRSITOP6})+(0.087*\text{IRSITOP7})
 \end{aligned}$$

equality of covariance matrices. Levene's Test was also not significant as it exceeded 0.05 for both variables ($p=0.53$ and 0.55). Since no violation was found the MANOVA was allowed to proceed and this showed that there was no significant effect between the attitudes shared by females and males towards IRISHNESS_{DON} and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK_{DON}, $F(2, 135) = 1.43$, $p>.05$. These results were confirmed by Pillai's trace $V = .021$, partial eta squared = .021, and a power to detect the effect equal to .301.

Contrariwise, with Box's M test below .05, the assumption of the equality of covariance matrices for IRISHNESS_{SC} and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK_{SC} was violated. Levene's test was not significant with $p>.05$ for both variables. However, using Pillai's trace, it was possible to assess that there was no significant effect of gender on attitudes towards the 'Irishness' and 'Identity' dimensions, $V= 0.007$, $F(2,142)= 0.465$, $p>.05$ ($=.629$), partial eta squared = 0.007, observed power = 0.125.

The 'Age' variable was coded by dividing ages into 6 age groups (18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, >65).

The values of Box's M test and Levene's Test for both DON and SC, with $p>.05$, showed that there was no violation of the assumptions. Therefore the MANOVA was allowed to proceed and the results showed that age did not have a significant effect on IRISHNESS and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK. Using Pillai's trace, it was possible to confirm the non-significance of age for these two dependent variables.⁴

The 'Education' variable was coded by categorizing 6 levels of education: Primary, Post-primary, Leaving Certificate, Vocational training, College, University.

With $p>.05$ both Box's M test and Levene's Tests showed that there was no violation of the assumptions and that the MANOVA was allowed to proceed. Using Pillai's trace, it was possible to confirm that education does not, in fact, have a significant effect on IRISHNESS_{DON} and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK_{DON}, $V= 0.06$, $F(10, 264)= 0.86$, $p>.05$, partial eta squared = .032, observed power = .454.

The analysis of the influence of education on IRISHNESS_{SC} and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK_{SC} showed that with Box's M test $>.05$ and non-significant values for Levene's test (which exceeds .05 for both variables) the MANOVA was allowed to proceed. The results revealed that, in this case, with $p<.05$ ($=.012$), the influence of education on the two dimensions connoting 'Irishness' and 'Identity' is significant, Pillai's trace $V = 0.155$, $F(10, 278)= 2.329$, partial eta squared = .077 and power to detect the effect was .930. Given the significance of the overall test, separate ANOVAs

⁴ SC: $V = 0.07$, $F(10, 278) = 0.971$, $p=.47$, partial eta squared = .034, power = .511;
DON: $V = 0.119$, $F(10, 272)= 1.716$, $p>.05$, partial eta squared = .059, power = .810

were examined. Significant univariate main effects for education were obtained for IRISHNESS_{SC}, $F(5, 139) = 2.380$, $p = .042$, partial eta squared = .79, observed power = .745, which confirmed the influence of education over attitudes linked to IRISHNESS_{SC}.

The language version of the questionnaire had no significant effect on IRISHNESS_{DON} and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK_{DON} with significant values for both Box's M and Levene's Tests $>.05$. These values were further confirmed by Pillai's trace, $V = 0.002$, $F(2, 140) = 0.149$, $p = 0.86$. Therefore, choosing to complete the English or the Irish version of the questionnaire is not in itself an indication of a potentially negative or positive attitude towards these two sub-scales.

The pattern of positive attitudes that emerged from the analysis of the scales devoted to Irish in education was maintained, moreover it also mirrors similar findings in previous research (Ó Fathaigh, 1996). However, a few discrepancies among the samples also emerged.

The results obtained from the statistical analysis of attitudes towards Irish as a symbol of ethnic identity and towards the future of the language indicate that there are differences between the three samples. The MANOVA, moreover, showed how the differences detected between the DON and SC samples may be ascribed to an education-related factor.

Similar findings were reported by Ó Riagáin (1992) in his study of the *Corca Dhuibhne* Gaeltacht which revealed marked discrepancies between different areas within that Gaeltacht.

4.6 Attitudes towards Government language policies

The role played by the Government through policies aimed at the maintenance and promotion of the Irish language is one of the most debated and delicate issues related to the survival of Irish. The items included in this section had the aim of assessing the impact of Government language policies and the importance they hold for Gaeltacht people. This scale contained thirteen statements aimed at exploring four main issues of Government language policies in support of the Irish language, which, more specifically, focussed on:

- the promotion of Irish;
- Government language policies for the Gaeltacht;
- the use of Irish;

- and, finally, feelings of apathy towards the Irish language and statements expressing attitudes against Government policies for the Gaeltacht.

The wording of these questions was particularly significant for the purposes of the measuring of the respondents' attitudes towards this specific topic since most of the statements included in this scale contained words such as 'revive', 'maintain', 'survive', and 'promotion', which were expected to cause a strong reaction. However, as the percentages in table 4.12 show, the degree of agreement and/or disagreement expressed by the three samples with regard to these thirteen items on the situation and the expectations linked to the promotion and maintenance of Irish through government policies in support of the Irish language differed significantly.

Table 4.12: Levels of (dis)agreement with GOVLOP (percentages)

GOVPOL1 <i>The Irish language will survive even without governmental support and subsidies</i>						GOVLOP2 <i>The promotion of Irish has been successful</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA		SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:146)	15.8	46.6	10.3	19.9	7.5	SC (N:146)	13.7	39.7	17.8	26	2.7
DON (N:147)	5.4	40.1	17	0	37.4	DON (N:142)	4.9	45.8	16.9	28.9	3.5
PF (N:17)	0	17.6	5.9	41.2	35.3	PF (N:17)	0	0	5.9	41.2	52.9
GOVLOP3 <i>The Government should give more say to Gaeltacht people in developing the Gaeltacht</i>						GOVLOP4 <i>The money that is spent reviving Irish could be invested in sectors that need it more urgently</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA		SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:146)	0	0.7	6.2	43.8	49.3	SC (N:144)	35.4	43.1	9.7	9.7	2.1
DON (N:147)	0.7	2	6.1	46.9	44.2	DON (N:142)	5.6	13.4	16.9	43.7	20.4
PF (N:17)	0	0	11.8	52.9	35.3	PF (N:17)	35.3	41.2	0	17.6	5.9
GOVLOP5 <i>It is right to finance the promotion of the Irish language</i>						GOVLOP6 <i>What the Government does about the Irish language is enough to maintain it</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA		SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:146)	1.4	2.7	5.5	40.4	50	SC (N:146)	19.9	54.1	9.6	12.3	4.1
DON (N:141)	0	2.8	10.6	44.7	41.8	DON (N:147)	3.4	12.2	12.9	55.1	16.3
PF (N:17)	0	0	0	35.3	64.7	PF (N:17)	29.4	70.6	0	0	0
GOVLOP7 <i>The political representatives of our community should be fluent Irish speakers</i>						GOVLOP8 <i>Irish speakers have a right to expect that Civil Servants will be able to speak Irish to them</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA		SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:146)	0	0	4.8	48.6	46.6	SC (N:145)	0.7	0.7	7.6	31.7	59.3
DON (N:147)	0.7	2	6.1	40.8	50.3	DON (N:146)	0.7	5.5	6.8	41.1	45.9
PF (N:17)	5.9	0	11.8	52.9	29.4	PF (N:17)	0	0	17.6	35.3	47.1
GOVLOP9 <i>The Government should spend more money on improving the teaching of Irish in schools</i>						GOVLOP10 <i>The Government should improve employment for Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA		SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:145)	0	3.4	9	36.6	51	SC (N:145)	0	2.1	5.5	42.8	49.7
DON (N:147)	0.7	3.4	6.8	33.3	55.8	DON (N:148)	0.7	1.4	8.1	40.5	49.3
PF (N:17)	0	0	0	29.4	70.6	PF (N:16)	0	0	0	25	75
GOVLOP11 <i>The Irish language policies should concentrate mostly on the Gaeltacht and not elsewhere</i>						GOVLOP12 <i>The use of Irish in the Gaeltacht will not increase unless there is a substantial increase in the use of Irish in the rest of Ireland</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA		SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:145)	13.1	42.1	15.2	15.2	14.5	SC (N:144)	2.8	22.9	9	45.1	20.1
DON (N:145)	6.9	40.7	15.2	24.8	12.4	DON (N:146)	21.2	44.5	13	20.5	0.7
PF (N:16)	31.3	62.5	6.3	0	0	PF (N:16)	12.5	56.3	6.3	18.8	6.3

GOVLOP13 <i>What the Government does to revive the Irish language is not important to me</i>					
	SD	D	NO	A	SA
SC (N:145)	40.7	39.3	8.3	11	0.7
DON (N:146)	38.4	42.5	11	6.8	1.4
PF (N:16)	56.3	37.5	6.3	0	0

SD=strongly disagree; D=disagree; NO=no opinion; A=agree; SA=strongly agree

When asked to express their level of agreement with the two items related to the success of the promotion of Irish (GOVLOP 2 and GOVLOP5) the majority of the three samples (90.4% of SC, 86.5% of DON, and 100% of PF) agreed that it is right to finance the promotion of Irish (GOVPOL5). However, only the PF sample agreed with the fact that the promotion of Irish has been successful, while SC and DON did not support this statement.

When asked to express their level of agreement with the statement “*What the Government does about the Irish language is enough to maintain it*” (GOVPOL6), DON supported this item whereas SC and PF expressed the opposite opinion. It is worth noting that given the political situation obtaining in the UK with regard to language policies in the period when the data were collected (2000-2001), the disagreement expressed by the PF sample with regard to what was being done by the UK government in support of the Irish language was hardly surprising. Likewise, while 94.1% of the PF sample agreed with the fact that the promotion of Irish has been successful (GOVPOL2), 53.4% of the SC sample and 50.7% of the DON sample did not give their support to this statement, thus endorsing a more negative view.

The topic of expectations related to Government language policies for the Gaeltacht was addressed by five items (GOVLOP3 and GOVLOP7 to GOVLOP10 inclusive). GOVLOP3, 9 and 10 put across the view that Gaeltacht people should be listened to more when it comes to deciding how to develop the Gaeltacht, that the teaching of Irish in schools should be improved and receive more funding, and that employment opportunities for Irish speakers should be improved. More than 80% of respondents of all three samples (100% of PF) endorsed these three statements. The responses given to items related to the use of Irish by local political representatives and civil servants show very clearly what the respondents from all three study areas thought should be the best practice with more than 90% of SC and DON, and 82.3% of PF respondents agreeing that political representatives should be fluent Irish speakers. The same high level of agreement (more than 80% of all three samples) was expressed in relation to the fact that they expect civil servants to be able to speak Irish to them.

The idea that Irish language policies should concentrate mostly on the Gaeltacht and not elsewhere (GOVLOP11) received the same consensus, though in negative terms and therefore was supported by a minority of SC and DON respondents (25,7% and 37.2% respectively) while no one from PF expressed agreement with it. The opinion of the three samples, however, is at variance when they state their level of agreement with item GOVPOL12, which deals with the idea that the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht will increase only if there is a substantial increase in the use of Irish in the rest of Ireland. In this case, only the SC sample agreed with the statement (65.2%) while PF (69%) and DON (65.7%) disagreed with it.

The analysis of the last group of items, i.e. those that express feelings of apathy towards the present and future situation of the Irish language and negative attitudes towards Government policies for the Gaeltacht, shows that in this instance the three samples tend to hold differing opinions. While all three samples display firm disagreement with what is stated in GOVPOL13 (*What the Government does to revive the Irish language is not important to me*), their opinions were at variance when it came to expressing their level of agreement with the chances for the Irish language to survive even without governmental support (GOVPOL1). While 45.5 % of DON and 62.4% of SC respondents disagree that this would be the case, 76.5% of the PF sample, for obvious reasons, agree with this statement. Indeed, given the history of the Irish language movement in Northern Ireland during the last century this result is hardly surprising since Irish speakers, until very recently, have had to contend with the neglectful and, at times, hostile stance of the Government in connection with other minority languages in general and towards Irish in particular. Finally, and quite surprisingly, while SC and PF firmly disagree with the item stating that what is invested for the revival of Irish could be invested in other sectors (GOVPOL4), the DON sample chose to endorse this statement.

The questionnaire distributed in DON and PF also included a binary question at the end of this scale, aimed at assessing the respondents' knowledge and awareness of differences between the language policies enacted in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The question asked them if governmental support for the Irish language in Irish-speaking districts of the Republic is better than that offered to the Irish language in Irish-speaking districts of Northern Ireland. According to the responses given by the DON sample the respondents are split in half with 50% who said 'yes' and 50% who said 'no', while 100% of the PF sample chose 'no'.

4.6.1 Factor analysis of the GOVPOL scale

Factor analysis was performed on this scale in order to verify the existence of latent dimensions not immediately evident from the analysis of descriptive data. According to the values listed in table 4.13, the KMO measure for sampling adequacy as well as Bartlett's test of sphericity are acceptable for both samples.

Table 4.13: KMO and Bartlett's Test for DON and SC for the GOVLOP scale

		<i>DON</i>	<i>SC</i>
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.767	.626
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	367.291	387.852
	df	78	78
	Sig.	.000	.000

The PCA with varimax rotation performed on the original 13 items comprising the GOVLOP scale extracted 5 components with eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 for the SC sample, which, in combination, explained 63% of the variance (table 4.14). However, on the basis of preliminary results, one item (GOVLOP4) was omitted because of its low communality.⁵ When the remaining 12 items were submitted, 5 factors were extracted.

Table 4.14: Summary of factor analysis for SC⁶

ITEMS	COMPONENTS (N=141)				
	Expectations	Promotion and involvement	Promotion and survival	Mostly Gaeltacht	Rest of Ireland
<i>Irish speakers have a right to expect that Civil Servants will be able to speak Irish to them (GOVLOP8)</i>	.80	.16	-.07	-.18	-.23
<i>The political representatives of our community should be fluent Irish speakers (GOVLOP7)</i>	.76	.17	.02	-.01	.17
<i>The Government should spend more money on improving the teaching of Irish in schools (GOVLOP9)</i>	.76	.13	-.09	.13	-.07

⁵ A low communality means that an item does not cluster with any of the other items.

⁶ Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

<i>The Government should improve employment for Irish-speakers in the Gaeltacht (GOVLOP10)</i>	.50	.06	-.03	.56	.49
<i>What the Government does to revive the Irish language is not important to me (GOVLOP13)</i>	-.44	.07	.51	-.43	-.04
<i>It is right to finance the promotion of the Irish language (GOVLOP5)</i>	.14	.80	-.16	.13	-.03
<i>The Government should give more say to Gaeltacht people in developing the Gaeltacht (GOVLOP3)</i>	.06	.77	-.02	.20	.07
<i>What the Government does about the Irish language is enough to maintain it (GOVLOP6)</i>	-.23	-.62	.14	.18	-.03
<i>The Irish language will survive even without governmental support and subsidies (GOVLOP1)</i>	.02	-.11	.78	.14	-.01
<i>The promotion of Irish has been successful (GOVLOP2)</i>	-.12	-.19	-.75	-.08	.02
<i>Irish language policies should concentrate mostly on the Gaeltacht and not elsewhere (GOVLOP11)</i>	.07	.16	.13	.72	-.20
<i>The use of Irish in the Gaeltacht will not increase unless there is a substantial increase in the use of Irish in the rest of Ireland (GOVLOP12)</i>	-.11	.06	.07	-.15	.89
Eigenvalues	3.345	1.428	1.344	1.085	1.041
% of variance	25.73%	10.99%	10.34%	8.34%	8%
Alpha	.72	.66	.476	.051	n/a

The first factor was labelled ‘Expectations’ because it seems to capture a dimension related to the expectations that respondents have in terms of what the focus of language policies in the Gaeltacht should be and expected linguistic behaviour on behalf of political representatives and civil servants. The three items that load onto the second factor are related to attitude statements that focus on the (lack of) success of the promotion and maintenance of the Irish language, as well as an increased involvement in the development of the Gaeltacht, the second dimension was labelled ‘Promotion and involvement’.

Given that only the first two factors obtained an adequate value of Cronbach’s alpha, factor scores were calculated only for these two dimensions.⁷

⁷**EXPECTATIONS**_{SC}=(0,076*GOVPOL1)-(0,120*GOVPOL2)+(0,057*GOVPOL3)+(0,140*GOVPOL5)-(0,226*GOVPOL6)+(0,760*GOVPOL7)+(0,798*GOVPOL8)+(0,764*GOVPOL9)+(0,502*GOVPOL10)-(0,122*GOVPOL11)-(0,107*GOVPOL12)-(0,437*GOVPOL13)

PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC}=(-0,105*GOVPOL1)-(0,189*GOVPOL2)+

The follow up MANOVA was performed on ‘Expectations’ and ‘Promotion and involvement’ with the three main independent variables: gender, age and education.

The preliminary results of the PCA performed on the data collected from the DON sample show that four factors were extracted with eigenvalues over Kaiser’s criterion of 1 (table 4.15). Because of low communalities, items GOVLOP1 and GOVLOP5 were omitted from the original 13 items.

Table 4.15: Summary of factor analysis for DON⁸

ITEMS	COMPONENTS (N=130)			
	Expectations and feelings	Promotion and survival	Rest of Ireland	Mostly Gaeltacht
<i>The Government should spend more money on improving the teaching of Irish in schools (GOVLOP9)</i>	.80	-.11	-.04	-.04
<i>The political representatives of our community should be fluent Irish speakers (GOVLOP7)</i>	.75	-.14	.13	.08
<i>The Government should give more say to Gaeltacht people in developing the Gaeltacht (GOVLOP3)</i>	.73	.27	-.07	.26
<i>The Government should improve employment for Irish-speakers in the Gaeltacht (GOVLOP10)</i>	.70	-.12	-.20	-.08
<i>What the Government does to revive the Irish language is not important to me (GOVLOP13)</i>	.63	-.32	.13	-.12
<i>Irish speakers have a right to expect that Civil Servants will be able to speak Irish to them (GOVLOP8)</i>	.62	-.26	.41	-.02
<i>The promotion of Irish has been successful (GOVLOP2)</i>	-.02	.79	.01	-.19
<i>What the Government does about the Irish language is enough to maintain it (GOVLOP6)</i>	-.34	.58	.22	.31
<i>The use of Irish in the Gaeltacht will not increase unless there is a substantial increase in the use of Irish in the rest of Ireland (GOVLOP12)</i>	-.03	.08	.84	-.10
<i>The money that is spent reviving Irish could be invested in sectors that need it more urgently (GOVLOP4)</i>	-.21	.53	-.46	-.15
<i>Irish language policies should</i>	-.03	-.13	-.08	.91

$(0.765*GOVPOL3)+(0.795*GOVPOL5)-(0.623*GOVPOL6)+(0.174*GOVPOL7)+(0.157*GOVPOL8)+(0.132*GOVPOL9)+(0.056*GOVPOL10)+(0.160*GOVPOL11)+(0.065*GOVPOL12)+(0.088*GOVPOL13)$

⁸ Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

<i>concentrate mostly on the the Gaeltacht and not elsewhere (GOVLOP11)</i>				
Eigenvalues	3.749	1.433	1.175	1.089
% of variance	28.84%	11.03%	9.04%	8.38%
Alpha	.812	.457	n/a	n/a

The PCA performed on the 11 remaining items extracted four factors. The first factor, ‘Expectations and feelings’, which explains 28.84 of the total variance, comprised six variables with loadings ranging from .80 to .62. The second factor appears to capture a dimension linked to ‘Promotion and survival’ and included three items with loadings that range between .79 and .53. The third and the fourth factors (‘Rest of Ireland’ and ‘Mostly Gaeltacht’) comprised only one item each. However, with high loadings equal to .84 and .91 respectively, they indicate that the dimensions that they connote have an important bearing on DON’s attitudes towards language maintenance policies.

Only the first factor (and its factor score) ‘Expectations and feelings’ was taken into consideration for the follow up ANOVA.⁹

The following section will illustrate the results of the ANOVA and MANOVA carried out on the factor scores computed from the underlying dimensions that emerged from the factor analysis of the GOVLOP scale.

4.6.2 The impact of socio-demographic variables on ‘Expectations and feelings’, ‘Promotion and involvement’, and ‘Expectations’

Since only one factor (with an acceptable alpha value) had emerged from the factor analysis of the GOVLOP scale from the DON data matrix, the impact of gender, age, education and language version of the questionnaire was assessed by means of a one-way ANOVA.

The distribution of respondents for the variable EXPECTATIONS AND FEELINGS_{DON} is shown in table 4.16:

⁹**EXPECTATIONS AND FEELINGS_{DON}** = (-0,023xGOVPOL2)+
(0.725XGOVPOL3)-(0.026xGOVPOL4)+(0.343xGOVPOL6)+(0.749XGOVPOL7)+
(0.618xGOVPOL8)+(0.800xGOVPOL9)+(0.695xGOVPOL10)+(0,031xGOVPOL11)-
(0.206xGOVPOL12)+(0.630xGOVPOL13)

Table 4.16: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for ‘Expectations and feelings’

Gender	DON
Female	N=62
Male	N=65
Age	DON
18-25	N= 33
26-35	N= 29
36-45	N= 20
46-55	N= 28
56-65	N= 14
Over 65	N= 6
Education	DON
Primary	N= 1
Post-primary	N= 43
Leaving certificate	N= 42
Vocational training	N= 9
College	N= 10
University	N= 22
Version	DON
Irish	N= 72
English	N= 58

The one-way ANOVA revealed that with $p > .05$, there was no violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance on EXPECTATIONS AND FEELINGS_{DON} of gender ($F(1, 125) = 0.019, p = .082$), and version ($F(1, 128) = .000, p = .993$).

On the contrary, a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance occurred when the one-way ANOVA was carried out on age ($p = .039, F(5, 124) = 2.426$) and education ($p = .027, F(5, 121) = 2.623$). The non-parametric (Wilcoxon) test confirmed that both age and education (respectively, $Z: -9,893$ and $Z: -9,779$) influence attitudes related to this specific dimension. Multiple comparisons carried out with Sheffé’s test, with $p = .034$, showed that the main differences occurred between the 26-35 and the 36-45 age groups.

I will now present the results of the MANOVA related to the effect of the selected socio-demographic variables on PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} and EXPECTATIONS_{SC}.

The distribution of respondents for these two dependent variables is illustrated in table 4.17:

Table 4.17: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for ‘Expectations and feelings’

Gender	SC
Female	N= 72
Male	N= 69
Age	SC
18-25	N= 34
26-35	N= 24
36-45	N= 29
46-55	N= 23
56-65	N= 17
Over 65	N= 14
Education	SC
Primary	N= 6
Post-primary	N= 15
Leaving certificate	N= 26
Vocational training	N= 19
College	N= 25
University	N= 50

Box’s M test for gender and PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} and EXPECTATIONS_{SC} was significant with $p < .05$, whereas there was no violation of the assumption of the equality of covariances with Levene’s test above .05 for both variables. Using Pillai’s trace, no significant effect gender was detected on the two dependent variable, $V = 0.012$, $F(2, 138) = 0.833$, $p > .05$ ($= .437$), partial eta squared = 0.012, observed power = 0.191.

Contrariwise, the analysis of the influence of age on PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} and EXPECTATIONS_{SC} showed a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance with $p < .05$, and the violation of the assumption of the equality of variances for PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} ($p < .05$). Sheffé’s post-hoc test showed that there were differences between the 18-25 and the 46-55 age groups. Given the violation of the two assumptions, a non-parametric test was carried out in order to ascertain the actual significance of the influence of age on the two dependent variables according to the difference highlighted by Sheffé’s post-hoc test. Wilcoxon test confirmed significant pair-wise age-related differences between the 18-25 and the 46-55 age groups in terms of attitudes towards the EXPECTATIONS_{SC} and PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} dimensions: EXPECTATIONS_{SC}, $W_s = 812$, $z = -2.83$, $p < .05$ ($= .005$), PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC}, $W_s = 723$, $z = -4.28$, $p < .001$.

With regard to the influence of education on PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} and EXPECTATIONS_{SC} Box's *M* test was $<.05$ and Levene's test $<.05$ ($=.041$) for PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC}. Since the two assumptions were violated, the MANOVA was not allowed to proceed. Sheffé's post-hoc test showed that for EXPECTATIONS_{SC} there were significant pair-wise education-related differences between 'Leaving certificate' and two other categories: 'College' and 'University'. Likewise, Sheffé's showed differences for PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT_{SC} between 'Primary' and four other categories: 'Post-primary', 'Vocational', 'College', and 'University'. Wilcoxon test confirmed that all these differences are highly significant, $p<.05$ and that the level of education does have an influence on attitudes towards these two dimensions.

The findings from the analysis of the GOVLOP scale are quite striking because they reiterate the existence of differences in opinion between the three samples. A comparison with the three surveys carried out in 1973, 1983 and 1993 (CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1984, 1994) reveals strong support reveals an increased level of agreement towards more state and public support for Irish, a support that since 1973 has been growing consistently (Ó Fathaigh, 1996).

In this case however, the factor that caused this divergence the attitudes held by DON and SC is both age- and education-related. Similar findings were reported by MacGréil and Rhatigan's study (2009).

4.7 Irish language use

Irish language use, intended as the frequency of use with specific people, and in particular places and contexts in which respondents from the three study areas reported using and speaking in Irish, was divided into two main categories of interaction: language use in the community and language use in the family.

The first category, Irish language use in the community, contained three scales designed to investigate Irish language use in a variety of domains which may be defined as

a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationships between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of activity of a speech community, in such a way that individual behaviour and social patterns can be distinguished from each other and yet related to each other" (Fishman, 1972: 442).

Thus, for the purposes of the research in the three study areas, individual language behaviour is taken into consideration within the general socio-cultural dynamics of the Irish-speaking community.

4.7.1. Language use in the community

This first category included both formal and informal interactions that take place with various people and in a variety of places. Three scales were designed in order to examine Irish language use when interacting with different people, in different places, and in more general situations.

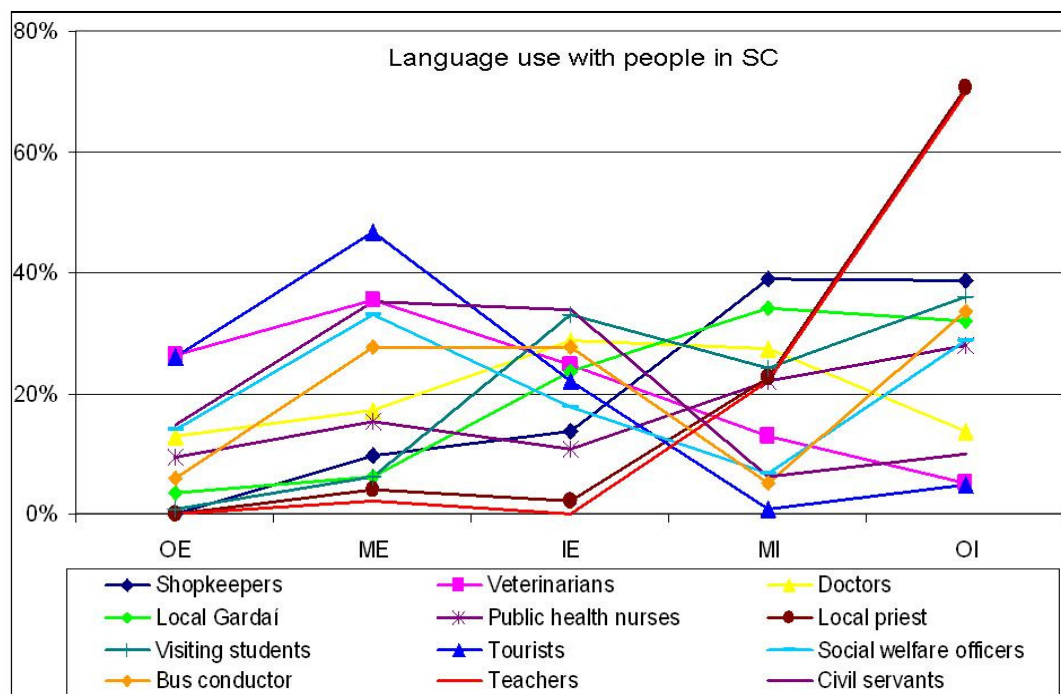
The first scale (DOMPEOPLE) contained 12 items, which identified 12 different people with whom it was assumed that respondents would have formal and informal interpersonal exchanges on a regular basis. These 12 categories of people were selected according to the community role-relationships identified by CILAR (1975) and Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin (1984, 1994).

The main distinction between formal and informal interaction is based on the existence of a close social continual relationship as opposed to a more distant and intermittent contact, both of which may or may not be influenced by one-sided or power relations and shared knowledge.

Respondents were asked to choose which language they used with the 12 categories of people by choosing one of the five options offered by the Likert scale used for this part of the questionnaire which ranged from 'Only English' (1) to 'Only Irish' (5).

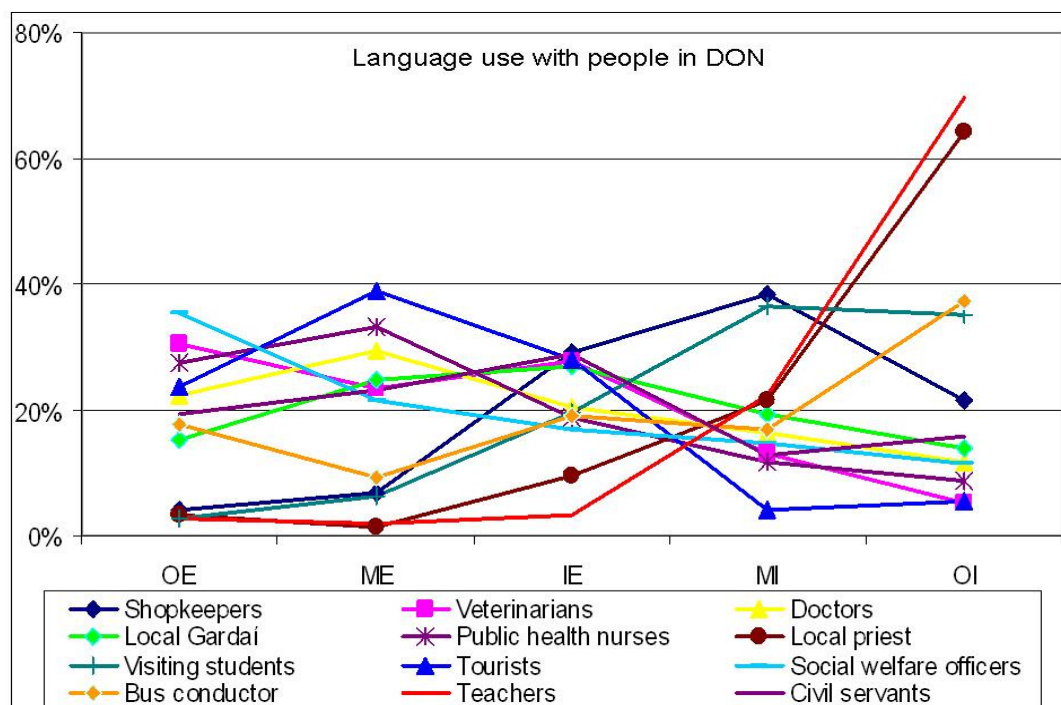
The analysis of descriptive data related to self-reported use of Irish with the 12 specific categories of people included in this section (figure 4.9) shows that the majority of the SC sample reported using always Irish only with teachers (70%), the local priest (70%). The results that show the level of language use with the local priest and with teachers are particularly important because they indicate that these two categories of speakers represent a strong and positive influence on Irish language use in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. English is mostly or always used in community interaction involving a higher degree of formality and distance, and, more specifically, with social welfare officers (77%), tourists (73%), veterinarians (62%), and Civil Servants (50%), thus indicating that in interactions with representatives of the public sector the use of English still predominates.

Figure 4.9: Language use with different categories of people in the South Connemara Gaeltacht



OE=Only English, ME=Mostly English, IE=Irish and English equally, MI=Mostly Irish, OI=Only Irish

Figure 4.10: Language use with different categories of people in the Donegal Gaeltacht



OE=Only English, ME=Mostly English, IE=Irish and English equally, MI=Mostly Irish, OI=Only Irish

A moderate use, which expresses the respondents' perception of a more balanced use of Irish and English, was reported with regard to doctors (29% moderate use plus 41% high use), nurses (31% moderate use plus 49% high use), and bus conductors (28% moderate use plus 35% high use).

The data related to Irish language use with specific categories of people in the Donegal Gaeltacht (figure 4.10 above) reflect the choice between Irish and English language use recorded for SC. Hence, self-reported Irish language use with teachers and the local priest is equally very high (69% and 64% respectively)

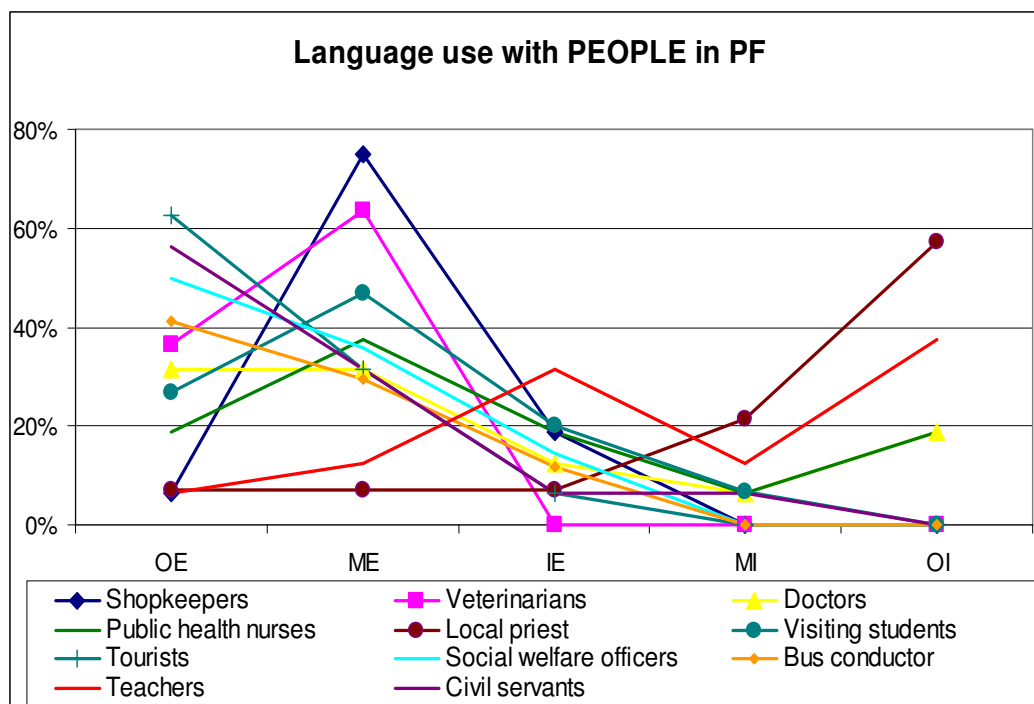
English is mostly or always used in community interaction involving a certain degree of formality and 'distance': veterinarians (54%), tourists (62%), Civil Servants (42%), and welfare officers (57%). These results confirm the fact that in interactions taking place with representatives of the public sector the use of English still predominates; therefore they might point to the fact that whenever an Irish speaker has to avail themselves of public services, there is a higher chance that he/she will be required to switch to English. Moreover, they also seem to indicate that tourism seems to have a negative impact on the use of Irish.

A generally moderate use of Irish was reported in interactions taking place with doctors, nurses, and bus conductors.

When we compare the data obtained in each Irish-speaking area a few differences emerge. First of all, the frequencies of use of both Irish and English show that in most instances there is a lower reported use of Irish in the DON study area as compared to SC (figure 4.11). In the case of Irish language use with the local *Gardaí*, public health nurses and Civil Servants, for instance, there is a clear indication of a more marked use of English in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

The data related to this first section of Irish language use in PF reflect the different political and social status of the language obtaining in Northern Ireland which strongly influences the use of Irish. Therefore, the self-reported use of Irish with many of the categories of interlocutors differs significantly from the results obtained for SC and DON, with teachers and local priest as the only two categories of interlocutors with whom there is a higher use of Irish. Moreover, as already mentioned in §3.5.5, one item was omitted from both the English and Irish versions of the questionnaire distributed among the Shaw's Road community, i.e. language use with the local Police, since it was thought that it might upset respondents.

Figure 4.11: Language use with different categories of people in PF



OE=Only English, ME=Mostly English, IE=Irish and English equally, MI=Mostly Irish, OI=Only Irish

The data collected through the second group of items on the Irish language focussed on selected community and local contexts. The frequencies displayed in table 4.18 show how the frequency of use of Irish is, with only a few exceptions, generally high for both SC and DON. Moreover, percentages also indicate that Irish language use is always higher in the SC study area. On the contrary, because of the nature of the contexts taken into consideration in this section, self-reported Irish language use tends to be much lower for the PF sample. Frequency of use of Irish was measured by means of a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'Never' (1) to 'Always' (5).

Table 4.18: Frequencies for DOMPLACE

How often do you use Irish:							
<i>PLACE1 In church</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:144)	2.1	1.4	2.1	14.6	79.9	4.69	0.771
DON (N:139)	2	0.7	4.1	16.3	76.9	2.83	1.324
PF (N:16)	6.3	18.8	6.3	31.3	37.5	3.75	1.342
<i>PLACE2 At work</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:137)	0.7	4.4	5.1	13.1	76.6	4.61	0.835
DON (N:147)	4.2	2.1	6.9	34	52.8	4.65	0.773

PF (N:14)	14.3	14.3	14.3	21.4	35.7	3.50	1.506
PLACE3 In public meetings							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:143)	2.1	3.5	7	30.8	56.6	4.36	0.916
DON (N:144)	7.5	3.7	13.4	42.5	32.8	4.29	0.989
PF (N:15)	6.7	13.3	40	33.3	6.7	3.20	1.014
PLACE4 In the local Garda station							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:137)	3.6	2.9	13.1	29.9	50.4	4.20	1.023
DON (N:134)	21.7	19.6	20.3	20.3	18.1	3.90	1.132
PF (N:0)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
PLACE5 At the doctors'							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	7.5	8.2	13	41.1	30.1	3.78	1.183
DON (N:138)	21.1	19	22.4	21.8	15.6	2.93	1.415
PF (N:17)	23.5	23.5	17.6	11.8	23.5	2.88	1.536
PLACE6 In public offices							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	9.6	15.8	32.9	30.1	11.6	3.18	1.133
DON (N:147)	17.6	18.3	24.6	21.8	17.6	2.92	1.372
PF (N:16)	43.8	18.8	31.3	6.3	0	2.00	1.033
PLACE7 At the petrol station							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:145)	1.4	1.4	13.8	19.3	64.1	4.43	0.880
DON (N:142)	13.9	3.5	9.7	31.3	41.7	3.04	1.350
PF (N:17)	52.9	11.8	35.3	0	0	1.82	0.951
PLACE8 At the Post Office							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	0	2.1	10.3	21.2	66.4	4.52	0.763
DON (N:144)	7.5	4.1	10.3	19.9	58.2	3.83	1.374
PF (N:17)	58.8	17.6	23.5	0	0	1.65	0.862
PLACE9 When visiting friends							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	4.8	4.8	8.2	32.9	49.3	4.17	1.085
DON (N:146)	7.4	3.4	12.8	40.5	35.8	4.17	1.228
PF (N:17)	0	5.9	29.4	41.2	23.5	3.82	0.883
PLACE10 In pubs							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:145)	2.1	3.4	9.7	35.2	49.7	4.27	0.922
DON (N:148)	6.1	4.8	14.3	42.9	32	3.94	1.138
PF (N:17)	5.9	11.8	41.2	29.4	11.8	3.29	1.047

Ne=never; S=seldom; Oc=occasionally; Of=often; A=always (%)

The contexts where Irish seems to be used on a more intensive basis are, for all three samples, the church, the workplace, public meetings (even though the PF sample reported a more moderate use in this context), meetings with friends and pubs.

The SC sample reported using Irish on a more frequent basis, compared to the other two samples, also at the doctors' and at the local Garda Station, where DON, on the contrary, reported a less intensive use of Irish.

In line with the data from the DOMPEOPLE section, a more moderate use was reported by both SC and DON regarding interactions taking place in public offices.

The PF sample reported using English more frequently in all those contexts that do not strictly pertain to the Shaw's Road community, i.e. the community itself, the nearby school, or those cultural centres that are particularly active in the promotion of the language. Therefore, local community contexts like the petrol station or the post office, which for the DON and SC samples represent places where people can easily use Irish, were identified as contexts in which the PF sample naturally reported using English more frequently.

It must also be noted, as already mentioned before, that the items included in this scale referred to more general situations than the items contained in the DOMPEOPLE section. Interaction in general contexts such as the church, the Police station or the doctor's surgery involve a larger number of people, which may not be necessarily connected directly with the context *per se*. For instance, people attend church not only to go to mass, but also to attend other social events organised by the parish, which appears to be one of the main aggregating forces in Gaeltacht communities.

The third group of items (GENUSE) related to Irish language use in different contexts included items that referred to more general situations as well as to the emotional and private sphere.

Frequency of use of the Irish language was rated from 1 ('Never') to 5 ('Always') according to the option chosen by the respondents from a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 4.19: Frequencies for GENUSE

How often do you use Irish:							
<i>GENUSE1 Outside the Gaeltacht</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:145)	6.2	19.3	35.9	31	7.6	3.14	1.020
DON (N:126)	7.6	13.8	29.7	40.7	8.3	3.77	1.089
PF (N:17)	5.9	5.9	23.5	64.7	0	3.47	0.874
<i>GENUSE2 In the Gaeltacht</i>							

	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:145)	0	0.7	4.1	26.2	69	4.63	0.599
DON (N:145)	0	4.8	4.1	49.3	41.8	3.28	1.052
PF (N:)	0	0	11.8	41.2	47.1	4.35	0.702
GENUSE3 In public occasions							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	0.7	2.7	14.4	52.1	30.1	4.08	0.784
DON (N:146)	3.5	8.5	15.6	50.4	22	4.28	0.759
PF (N:16)	12.5	0	43.8	43.8	0	3.19	0.981
GENUSE4 At meal times							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	2.1	2.7	7.5	24.7	63	4.44	0.902
DON (N:146)	4.1	6.2	16.6	37.9	35.2	3.79	0.999
PF (N:17)	5.9	5.9	17.6	52.9	17.6	3.71	1.047
GENUSE5 When angry or excited							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:144)	3.5	6.9	10.4	18.8	60.4	4.26	1.114
DON (N:145)	9	10.3	13.1	37.9	29.7	3.94	1.069
PF (N:16)	6.3	12.5	31.3	18.8	31.3	3.56	1.263
GENUSE6 To avoid others understanding what is being said							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:144)	9	13.2	24.3	18.1	35.4	3.58	1.341
DON (N:145)	7.9	12.1	20	15.7	44.3	3.69	1.250
PF (N:15)	40	6.7	33.3	13.3	6.7	2.40	1.352
GENUSE7 In private occasions							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:141)	2.8	4.3	8.5	36.2	48.2	4.23	0.974
DON (N:140)	5.6	6.9	11.8	43.1	32.6	3.76	1.339
PF (N:15)	6.7	0	20	73.3	0	3.60	0.828
GENUSE8 Helping children with homework							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:112)	0.9	0.9	8	25.9	64.3	4.52	0.759
DON (N:144)	5.9	3	11.9	28.1	51.1	3.90	1.105
PF (N:12)	0	0	8.3	0	91.7	4.83	0.577

Ne=never; S=seldom;Oc=occasionally;Of=often;A=always (%)

All three samples reported a general intensive use of Irish in all the contexts taken into consideration in this section (table 4.19). A few exceptions are represented by the percentages for PF which denote a more moderate use in relation to Irish language use in public occasions, when angry or excited and to avoid others understanding what is being said. With regard to the first item (*Outside the Gaeltacht*), for which all three

samples reported a moderate use of Irish, Irish language use by the PF sample is slightly higher than that reported by both DON and SC respondents.

In general, levels of reported use were lower than expected, a situation that reflects levels of use recorded by both Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin (1984 and 1994) and, in particular, by Ó Riagáin (1992). Compared to Mac Gréil and Rhatigan's survey (2009), they represent a much lower level of use, which is also a consequence of the conservative categorization of levels of use following Ó Riagáin (1992).

An interesting finding is related to how reported level of use varies according to whether the interaction occurs with specific interlocutors or in specific places or within specific contexts. Moreover, the factor analysis performed on these scales highlighted two dimensions: 'formal' vs. 'informal', which confirms formal interactions as dominated by the English language.

4.7.2. *The home domain*

The last two scales relating to Irish language use in different domains were designed in order to measure interaction in the home domain and, more specifically, to assess intergenerational use and transmission of the Irish language.

The two groups of items related to the home domain focused on Irish language use between married respondents and their spouse, between members of the household, and between parents and children. These questions aimed at ascertaining the level of home bilingualism and intergenerational transmission of the Irish language in the three study areas.

The frequency of use of Irish was rated by using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'Never' (1) to 'Always' (5).

The first group of items on the home domain was related to language use in the respondents' family of origin. Eight role-relations were included in this sub-set to represent three generations: the grandparents, the parents, and the respondents.

Table 4.20: Frequencies for USEDHOME

How often was Irish used in your home between:							
<i>USEDHOME1 Between mother and father</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>SC (N:145)</i>	8.3	5.5	5.5	10.3	70.3	4.29	1.285
<i>DON (N:142)</i>	16.8	4.9	9.8	14.7	53.8	3.93	1.392
<i>PF (N:16)</i>	43.8	6.3	12.5	25	12.5	2.56	1.590
<i>USEDHOME2 Between mother and children</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>

SC (N:146)	3.4	8.2	7.5	12.3	68.5	4.34	1.135
DON (N:143)	10.3	8.3	11.7	20.7	49	3.84	1.527
PF (N:15)	53.3	6.7	13.3	13.3	13.3	2.27	1.580
USEDHOME3 Between father and children							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:146)	6.8	4.1	6.8	13	69.2	4.34	1.199
DON (N:145)	9.9	4.9	4.9	16.9	63.4	3.90	1.368
PF (N:15)	53.3	0	0	26.7	20	2.60	1.805
USEDHOME4 By children with each other							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:142)	4.2	6.3	9.2	23.9	56.3	4.22	1.118
DON (N:142)	11	8.2	11.6	24	45.2	4.19	1.321
PF (N:15)	46.7	6.7	20	13.3	13.3	2.40	1.549
USEDHOME5 By parents with relatives							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:144)	4.9	4.2	5.6	22.9	62.5	4.34	1.085
DON (N:146)	8.3	4.1	9.7	24.1	53.8	3.84	1.368
PF (N:14)	50	14.3	14.3	21.4	0	2.07	1.269
USEDHOME6 By parents with friends							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:142)	2.8	3.5	6.3	28.9	58.5	4.37	0.956
DON (N:145)	6.2	3.4	11.6	35.6	43.2	4.11	1.242
PF (N:15)	46.7	13.3	13.3	26.7	0	2.20	1.320
USEDHOME7 By grandparents with grandchildren							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:136)	4.4	2.9	2.9	11.8	77.9	4.56	1.009
DON (N:146)	9	3	10.5	15	62.4	4.06	1.116
PF (N:13)	61.5	7.7	7.7	7.7	15.4	2.08	1.605
USEDHOME8 By grandparents with parents							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
SC (N:135)	4.4	3	4.4	13.3	74.8	4.51	1.028
DON (N:133)	9	0.8	7.5	19.5	63.2	4.19	1.280
PF (N:13)	69.2	7.7	0	0	23.1	2.00	1.732

Ne=never; S=seldom;Oc=occasionally;Of=often;A=always (%)

According to the descriptive data in table 4.20, in both study areas, the majority of respondents reported a very high use of Irish in their family of origin (in all instances, more than 80% in the SC and more than 69% in the DON). However, there seems to be a lower reported use of Irish in the Donegal Gaeltacht as compared to the use reported in the South Connemara study area.

One of the most interesting features that emerged from the analysis of the responses given to these items was related to the reported use of Irish between grandparents and grandchildren (the respondents): (SC: 77.9%, DON: 62.4%). Irish language use was reported as being used always between grandparents and parents (SC: 74.8%, DON: 63.2%), mother and father (SC: 70.3%, DON: 53.8%), mother and children (SC: 68.5%, DON: 49%), and between father and children (SC: 69.2%, DON: 63.4%). Moreover, there appears to be a higher use of Irish between ‘Father and children’ reported by DON and when compared with the other dyads.

Data for the PF sample, on the contrary, show that English was the main language spoken in the family of origin of the respondents, an indication of the fact that the great majority of people who live in the Shaw’s Road community in Belfast are not native speakers of Irish but learnt it as a second language and then decided to use it as their home language and to raise their children through the medium of Irish.

These data may also be a positive indication of the possibility that married respondents may use Irish in their present family, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 4.21: Frequencies for NOWHOME

How often is Irish used in your home between:							
<i>NOWHOME1 Between self and spouse</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
<i>SC</i> (N:97)	1	3.1	9.3	14.4	72.2	4.54	0.867
<i>DON</i> (N:102)	7.8	2.9	5.9	19.6	63.7	4.28	1.205
<i>PF</i> (N:17)	11.8	5.9	0	23.5	58.8	4.12	1.409
<i>NOWHOME2 Between mother and children</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
<i>SC</i> (N:92)	0	3.3	6.5	14.1	76.1	4.63	0.752
<i>DON</i> (N:70)	10	7.1	14.3	24.3	44.3	3.86	1.333
<i>PF</i> (N:14)	0	21.4	14.3	7.1	57.1	4.00	1.301
<i>NOWHOME3 Between father and children</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
<i>SC</i> (N:92)	0	4.3	1.1	20.7	73.9	4.64	0.720
<i>DON</i> (N:87)	3.6	7.1	10.7	29.8	48.8	4.13	1.095
<i>PF</i> (N:14)	7.1	7.1	0	14.3	71.4	4.36	1.277
<i>NOWHOME4 By children with each other</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
<i>SC</i> (N:88)	0	4.5	6.8	28.4	60.2	4.44	0.814
<i>DON</i> (N:79)	10.1	6.3	6.3	24.1	53.2	4.04	1.334
<i>PF</i> (N:14)	0	0	28.6	14.3	57.1	4.29	0.914
<i>NOWHOME5 By grandparents with grandchildren</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
<i>SC</i> (N:89)	1.1	2.2	5.6	19.1	71.9	4.58	0.795
<i>DON</i> (N:82)	4.9	6.1	15.9	35.4	37.8	3.95	1.110

<i>PF</i> (N:14)	64.3	0	0	14.3	21.4	2.29	1.816
<i>NOWHOME6 By children with friends</i>							
	Ne	S	Oc	Of	A	Mean	SD
<i>SC</i> (N:91)	1.1	9.9	15.4	40.7	33	3.95	0.993
<i>DON</i> (N:78)	6.4	9	5.1	28.2	51.3	4.09	1.229
<i>PF</i> (N:13)	7.7	0	7.7	76.9	7.7	3.77	0.927

Ne=never; S=seldom;Oc=occasionally;Of=often;A=always (%)

This second group of items on the home domain focused on language use in the respondents' present home/family and was directed at married or cohabiting respondents.

According to the replies given to the items contained in this part of the questionnaire, respondents reported a very high use of the Irish language in their present family too, which is always above 70% in the South Connemara Gaeltacht and above 65% in the Donegal Gaeltacht (if we sum up the results of 'Often' and 'Always'). However, by implementing a more conservative interpretation of the results, following O Riagáin (1992) who considers as 'High' use only answers that fall within the 'always' option, then the reported use between the dyads included in the scale show that, generally speaking there seems to be a slightly lower level of Irish language use in the current family. Moreover, levels of use for DON are lower than SC, while the lowest levels of use were reported for PF.

These data, when compared with the responses given to the items in DOMPEOPLE, appear to indicate that, with the exception of the PF sample, the intergenerational transmission of the Irish language that took place in the family of origin is likely to have influenced the transmission of Irish in the present family domain. However, it also appears that, in the Republic of Ireland, language maintenance and production in the family domain may be more at risk in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

4.7.3 Attitudes towards the transmission of Irish to children

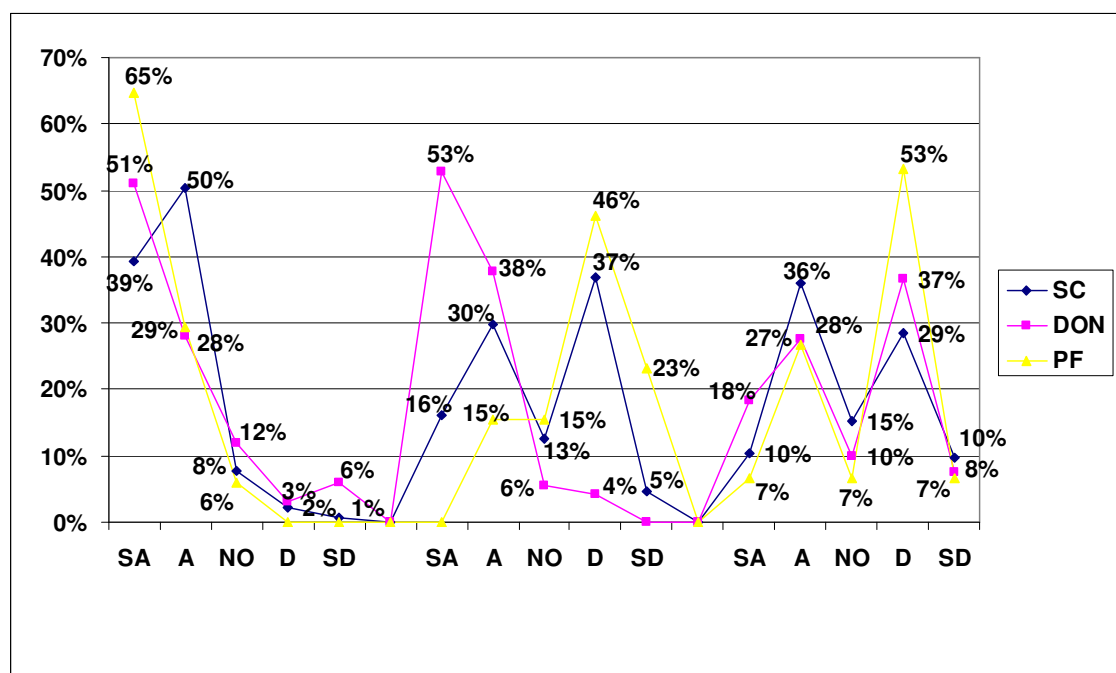
The home domain section ended with three general attitudinal statements on Irish language transmission to children:

1. *Children should be brought up through Irish*
2. *My children have learnt as much Irish as they need to know from the family*
3. *Children must be left free to decide for themselves which language to speak*

Figure 4.12 shows the level of agreement expressed by the three samples on a 5-point Likert scale with value 1 representing 'strongly disagree' and 5 'strongly agree'. All three samples expressed agreement with the first statement, thus supporting the

opinion that children should be raised through Irish. The opinions of the three samples with regard to the second item seem to be more at variance. While the respondents from the DON sample endorsed the statement, i.e. that their children have learnt as much Irish as they need from the family, the level of agreement and disagreement expressed by the SC sample was more balanced, while the majority of the PF sample disagreed with it. The responses given to the third item, show that while both the DON and SC samples are divided in terms of (dis)agreement with the fact that children must be left free to decide what language they prefer to speak, 60% of the PF sample disagreed with it.

Figure 4.12: Attitudinal statements on the transmission of the Irish language to children.



4.8 Data adequacy of Irish language use scales

Factor analysis of the five scales designed to measure Irish language use was performed on the data gathered in the SC and DON study areas, whereas, given the small number of cases pertaining to the PF sample this analysis was not deemed suitable for the data collected in this study area.

Before using factor analysis, the data adequacy was tested. The following table shows KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values for the five scales comprising the Irish language use section.

Table 4.22: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for Irish language use scales

Scale	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		Bartlett's Test of Sphericity							
			Approx. Chi-Square		df		Sig.		Alpha	
	<i>DON</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>DON</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>DON</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>DON</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>DON</i>	<i>SC</i>
<i>Dompeople</i>	.877	.782	521.410	530.626	66	66	.000	.000	.895	.848
<i>Domplace</i>	.904	.832	735.094	590.892	45	45	.000	.000	.911	.850
<i>Genuse</i>	.893	.832	581.092	359.447	28	28	.000	.000	.886	.793
<i>Usedhome</i>	.860	.846	859.478	1063.427	28	28	.000	.000	.936	.947
<i>Nowhome</i>	.653	.784	274.241	162.287	15	15	.000	.000	.889	.813

The KMO indicators ranged from .653 to .904, thus adequately near to 1.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was highly significant ($p < 0.000$). Therefore KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values indicate the appropriateness of factor analysis and support the factorability of the matrix.

Cronbach's Alpha of all five scales was $>.79$, which, according to Bagozzi and Yi's (1988) recommendation of 0.6, made the variables reliable for data analysis.

4.8.1 Factor analysis of DOMPEOPLE

The PCA for the DOMPLACE scale allowed to extract 3 factors for SC with eigenvalues over 1 and which account for more than 60% of the variance. Table 4.23 illustrates the factor loadings and which items cluster around each factor, and also how the level of formality and informality related to Irish language use is linked to different categories of people in the two study areas.

The first factor extracted from the SC data matrix, 'Informal', was represented by six variables with factor loadings ranging from .80 to .60. They were Shopkeepers, Local *Gardaí*, Teachers, Public health nurses, Local priest, Doctors. This dimension accounted for 38.61% of the rated variance. Five variables with loadings ranging from .84 to .63 belonged to the second factor, 'Formal', and they included Civil Servants, Tourists, Social welfare officers, Bus conductor and Veterinarians. The rated variance for this factor was 13.57%. A third dimension which explained 8.67% of the variance and comprises one single item, 'Visiting students learning Irish' (.83) was also extracted by the PCA.

Table 4.23: Factor analysis of DOMPEOPLE¹⁰

	Factors (SC, N=117)			Factors (DON, N=92)	
	Informal	Formal	External influence	Formal	Informal
Shopkeepers	.80	.06	-.02	.41	.75
Local <i>Gardaí</i>	.76	.29	.09	.71	.38
Teachers	.70	.06	.47	.21	.85
Public health nurses	.70	.41	-.13	.74	.18
Local priest	.60	.08	.25	.31	.82
Doctors	.60	.44	-.25	.74	.22
Civil Servants	-.02	.84	.14	.64	.29
Tourists	.14	.74	.10	.47	.31
Social welfare officers	.12	.66	.19	.73	.20
Bus conductor	.35	.64	.06	.45	.52
Veterinarians	.27	.63	-.06	.75	.12
Visiting students learning Irish	.08	.25	.83	.09	.69
Eigenvalues	4.634	1.634	1.040	5.691	1.303
% of variance	38.61%	13.57%	8.67%	47.43%	10.86%
Alpha	.803	.783	n/a	.853	.800

The PCA on the DON data matrix with Varimax rotation revealed two potential subscales from the 12-item set, which explained 58.29% of the total variance. 11 items loaded onto these two dimensions. The six items that loaded onto the first factor, Local *Gardaí*, Public health nurses, Veterinarians, Civil Servants, Social welfare officers, Doctors), could be interpreted as representing the ‘Formal’ category of speakers. The second cluster of items included five variables that appear to identify a more ‘Informal’ category of interlocutors: ‘Visiting students learning Irish’, ‘Bus conductors’, ‘Local priests’, ‘Teachers’, ‘Shopkeepers’.

The difference between the two samples is also marked by the third factor extracted for SC, ‘External influence’, that includes only one item, ‘Visiting students learning Irish’ with a loading of .83, and which for DON loads onto the ‘Informal settings’ dimension.

The factor scores that were computed for the two dimensions, ‘Formal’ and ‘Informal’ that had emerged for each data matrix,¹¹ were subsequently used in the

¹⁰ Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations for SC and for 3 DON.

¹¹ **FORMAL**_{SC}=(0.797xShopkeepers)+(0.759xLocal *Gardaí*)+(0.702xTeachers)+(0.701xPublic health nurses)+(0.604xLocal priests)+(0.599xDoctors)-(0.020xCivil Servants)+(0.142xTourists)+(0.118xSocial welfare officers)+(0.345xBus conductor)+(0.269xVeterinarians)+(0.080xVisiting students)
INFORMAL_{SC}=(0.065xShopkeepers)+(0.293xLocal *Gardaí*)+(0.006xTeachers)+

follow up MANOVA to assess whether gender, age and education have any impact on the language used in formal and informal communication.

4.8.2 Impact of socio-demographic factors on 'Formal' and 'Informal'

This section will illustrate whether there was any significant effect of socio-demographic variables on the use of Irish with formal and informal interlocutors.

The distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for two dimensions extracted from the DOMPEOPLE scale is shown in table 4.24:

Table 4.24: Gender distribution of respondents for 'Formal' and 'Informal'

Gender	SC	DON
Female	N= 64	N= 49
Male	N= 53	N= 40
Age	SC	DON
18-25	N= 27	N= 26
26-35	N= 21	N= 20
36-45	N= 24	N= 12
46-55	N= 17	N= 17
56-65	N= 17	N= 11
>65	N= 11	N= 6
Education	SC	DON
Primary	N= 6	N= 1
Post-primary	N= 15	N= 33
Leaving certificate	N= 16	N= 26
Vocational training	N= 17	N= 5
College	N= 21	N= 7
University	N= 42	N= 18
Version	DON	
Irish	N= 45	
English	N= 47	

With $p > .05$ Box's M test was not significant for SC and DON for both factors, thus the MANOVA was allowed to proceed. Using Pillai's trace it was possible to

(0.408xPublic health nurses)+(0.083xLocal priest)+(0.437xDoctors)-(0.843xCivil Servants)+(0.737xTourists)+
(0.660xSocial welfare officers)+
(0.642xBus conductor)+(0.629xVeterinarians)+(0.247xVisiting students)
FORMAL_{DON}=(0.751xVeterinarians)+(0.740xDoctors)+(0.737xPublic health nurses)+(0.728xSocial welfare officers)+(0.709xLocal *Gardaí*)+(0.636xCivil Servants)+(0.472xTourists)+(0.209xTeachers)+(0.310xLocal priest)+
(0.411xShopkeepers)+(0.091xVisiting students)+(0.452xBus conductor)
INFORMAL_{DON}=(0.118xVeterinarians)+(0.224xDoctors)+(0.178xPublic health nurses)+(0.204xSocial welfare officers)+(0.378xLocal *Gardaí*)+(0.286xCivil Servants)+(0.312xTourists)+(0.851xTeachers)+(0.816xLocal priests)+
(0.751xShopkeepers)+(0.689xVisiting students)+(0.522xBus conductors)

confirm that gender does not influence the use of Irish in the formal and informal dimensions (DON: $V = 0.002$, $F(2, 86) = 0.09$, $p = .92$; SC: $V = .005$, $F(10, 222) = 0.265$, $p = .141$, partial eta squared = .005).

In the case of the effect of age on Irish language use within the FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON} dimensions Box's M test was significant with $p < .05$ ($= .03$), while Levene's test was not significant for both variables (with $p > .05$). Using Pillai's trace it was possible to assess that there was no significant effect of age on the use of Irish with people pertaining to the FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON} dimensions, $V = 0.04$, $F(10, 172) = 0.31$, $p > .05$ ($= .979$). The post-hoc test confirmed the non-significance of age for these two dimensions.

Box's M test was not significant for FORMAL_{SC} and INFORMAL_{SC}. Using Pillai's trace, the MANOVA showed that with $p > .05$ ($= .751$) there was no significant effect of age on the two dependent variables, $V = .059$, $F(10, 222) = 0.671$, partial eta squared = 0.029, power = .348.

In relation to the influence of education on FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON}, Box's M test, with $p < .05$, indicated that there was a violation of the assumption of the equality of covariances for FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON}, which was reiterated by Levene's Test, with $p < .05$ for both dependent variables. Since one of the categories, 'Primary' had fewer than two cases, the post-hoc test was not carried out. Therefore, a non-parametric test was instead undertaken on each pair of categories. Wilcoxon test showed that the level of education is not significant for Irish language use with the categories of people pertaining to the FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON} dimensions.

With a non-significant value obtained by Box's M test, $p > .05$, the analysis of the effect of education on FORMAL_{SC} and INFORMAL_{SC} by means of a one-way MANOVA was allowed to proceed. Using Pillai's trace, there was no significant effect of education on the two dependent variables, $F(10, 222) = 0.838$, $p > .05$, partial eta squared = 0.036 and observed power = 0.437.

While both Box's M test and Levene's test with $p > .05$, indicated that there was no violation of assumptions on the analysis of the effect of the language version of the questionnaire on FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON}, Pillai's trace did not confirm this result, $V = 0.12$, $F(2, 89) = 6.05$, $p < .05$, partial eta squared = 0.063, observed power = 0.579. Separate univariate ANOVAs on the outcome variables revealed that the choice of the English or the Irish version of the questionnaire was significant in terms of Irish language use in both the formal and informal dimensions, FORMAL_{DON}, $F(1, 90) = 5.50$, $p < .05$, and INFORMAL_{DON}, $F(1, 90) = 10.43$, $p < .05$. The non-parametric test that

was carried out confirmed the fact that the respondents who chose to complete the questionnaire in Irish are more likely to use Irish on a more intensive basis with the categories of people pertaining to both FORMAL_{DON} and INFORMAL_{DON}. than respondents who chose to complete the questionnaire in English, FORMAL_{DON}: $W_s = 1876$, $z = -2.42$, $p < .05$ ($=.016$); INFORMAL_{DON}: $W_s = 1795$, $z = -3.05$, $p < .05$ ($=.002$).

4.8.3 Factor analysis of DOMPLACE

The factor analysis performed on the DOMPLACE scale extracted 2 components for both SC and DON. As can be seen in table 4.25, the different settings in which Irish is used in the SC and DON differ in terms of the level of formality and informality associated with each place.

Table 4.25: Factor analysis of DOMPLACE¹²

	Factors (SC, N=128)			Factors (DON, N=124)	
	Informal settings	2	Formal settings	Informal settings	Formal settings
When visiting friends	.85	.20	.13	.70	.20
In pubs	.85	.20	.15	.72	.26
In public meetings	.81	.08	.15	.72	.41
In the local Garda station	.72	.18	.24	.19	.84
At work	.68	.04	-.04	.32	.82
At the Post Office	.60	.60	.08	.27	.78
At the petrol station	.45	.42	.30	.68	.48
At the doctors'	.27	.45	.64	.71	.39
In public offices	.06	-.07	.92	.85	.15
In church	.03	.88	-.08	.86	.22
Eigenvalues	4.633	1.166	1.020	5.708	1.155
% of variance	46.33%	11.66%	10.20%	57.02%	11.55%
Alpha	.880	.439	.608	.904	.796

The PCA performed on the SC data matrix revealed the existence of 3 underlying dimensions. The first one, 'Informal settings', which accounts for 46.33% of the total variance, is the result of the clustering of six items: 'When visiting friends', 'In pubs', 'In public meetings', 'In the local Garda station', 'At the Post Office', 'At work'. The 'Formal setting' factor accounts for 11.66% of the total variance and includes two items, 'At the doctors' and 'In public offices'. The other factor included 'In church' and 'At the post office' which is an item that loads onto the first factor too.

¹² Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 4 iterations for DON and 12 for SC.

The two dimensions extracted from the DON data matrix show that the division between the formal and informal settings is based on the clustering of different items. In this case, the first dimension, ‘Informal settings’, includes 7 of the 10 items comprising this scale and accounts for 57.02% of the variance, while the three remaining items load onto the second factor, ‘Formal settings’.

The follow up MANOVA, illustrated in the following section, used the factor scores computed for each of the ‘Formal settings’ and ‘Informal settings’ dimensions¹³ to ascertain the influence of gender, age, education, and the language version of the questionnaire on the respondents’ language use.

4.8.4 Impact of socio-demographic factors on ‘Formal settings’ and ‘Informal settings’

This section will show the results obtained with the MANOVA carried out with the aim of assessing the effect of the selected socio-demographic variable on the use of Irish in formal and informal settings.

Table 4.26 displays the distribution of respondents according to the selected socio-demographic factors for the variables obtained by computing the factor scores of the underlying dimensions that emerged from the factor analysis of the DOMPLACE scale.

Table 4.26: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for ‘Formal settings’ and ‘Informal settings’

Gender	SC	DON
Female	N= 63	N= 61
Male	N= 65	N= 59

¹³ **INFORMAL SETTINGS**_{SC}=(0.031xIn Church)+(0.679xAt work)+(0.806xIn public meetings)+(0.724xIn the local Garda station)+(0.274xAt the doctors’)+(0.057xIn public offices)+(0.451xAt the petrol station)+(0.595xAt the Post Office)+(0.848xWhen visiting friends)+(0.850xIn pubs)

FORMAL SETTINGS_{SC}=(0.000xIn church)-(0.044xAt work)+(0.153xIn public meetings)+(0.243xIn the local Garda station)+(0.644xAt the doctors’)+(0.916xIn public offices)+(0.299xAt the petrol station)+(0.074xAt the Post Office)+(0.131xWhen visiting friends)+(0.151xIn pubs)

INFORMAL SETTINGS_{DON}=(0.857xIn pubs)+(0.845xWhen visiting friends)+(0.724xAt work)+(0.721xIn public meetings)+(0.707xAt the post office)+(0.704xIn church)+(0.682xAt the petrol station)+(0.186xLocal Garda station)+(0.317xIn public offices)+(0.267xAt the doctors’)

FORMAL SETTINGS_{DON}=(0.217xIn pubs)+(0.145xWhen visiting friends)+(0.257xAt work)+(0.410xIn public meetings)+(0.394xAt the post office)+(0.200xIn church)+(0.477xAt the petrol station)+(0.839xLocal Garda station)+(0.817xIn public offices)+(0.780xAt the doctors’)

Age	SC	DON
18-25	N= 30	N= 30
26-35	N= 21	N= 30
36-45	N= 27	N= 17
46-55	N= 22	N= 27
56-65	N= 18	N= 13
>65	N= 10	N= 7
Education	SC	DON
Primary	N= 3	N= 1
Post-primary	N= 14	N= 43
Leaving certificate	N= 20	N= 31
Vocational training	N= 18	N= 11
College	N= 24	N= 10
University	N= 49	N= 24
Version	DON	
Irish	N= 74	
English	N= 50	

With a non-significant value obtained by both Box's M test and Levene's test, with $p>.05$, the MANOVA was allowed to proceed. Using Pillai's trace, it was possible to ascertain that there was no significant effect of gender on the use of Irish in FORMAL SETTINGS and INFORMAL SETTINGS, (DON: $V= 0.002$, $F(2,117)= 0.13$, $p>.05$, size effect = 0.02, observed power = 0.069; SC: $V= 0.010$, $F(2, 125)= 0.66$, $p>.05$, size effect = 0.01, observed power = 0.159).

Box's M test for FORMAL SETTINGS_{DON} and INFORMAL SETTINGS_{DON} was not significant, $p>.05$, consequently, it was possible to proceed with the MANOVA. Pillai's trace indicated that there was no significant effect of age in terms of choosing to use Irish in formal and informal settings, $V= 0.09$, $F(10, 236)= 1.08$, $p>.05$, size effect = 0.044, observed power = 0.565.

With Box's M test $<.05$, the assumption of the equality of the covariance of matrices was violated. Levene's test, $p=.001$, showed that the assumption of the equality of variances was violated by INFORMAL SETTINGS_{SC}. Sheffé's post-hoc test did not reveal any age-related pair-wise differences. The non-parametric tests that were carried out to assess the actual significance of age on FORMAL SETTINGS_{SC} and INFORMAL SETTINGS_{SC} confirmed that age does not influence the use of Irish in the contexts pertaining to these two dimensions.

Both Box's M test and Levene's Test were not significant with $p>.05$. Using Pillai's trace, the MANOVA that was carried out confirmed that the impact of education was not significant for the use of Irish in FORMAL SETTINGS_{DON} and INFORMAL SETTINGS_{DON}: $V= 0.04$, $F(10, 228)= 0.48$, $p>.05$, size effect = 0.021, observed power = 0.247.

In the case of the influence of education on the use of Irish in FORMAL SETTINGS_{SC} and INFORMAL SETTINGS_{SC} Box's *M* test revealed that the assumption of the equality of covariances was violated with $p < .05$. The assumption of the equality of variances was violated by INFORMAL SETTINGS_{SC} with $p = .000$. Sheffé's post-hoc tests showed that there were four significant education-related pair-wise differences, namely between 'Leaving certificate' and 'Post-primary', 'Vocational training' and 'College', and 'University'. Wilcoxon test showed that these differences in the use of Irish according to the level of education are indeed significant for all four pairs.

With $p < .05$, the assumptions related to the choice of the language version for FORMAL SETTINGS_{DON} and INFORMAL SETTINGS_{DON} were violated. Hence, the MANOVA was not allowed to proceed. The non-parametric test that was carried out indicated that the choice of completing the questionnaire in Irish is indeed indicative of a higher use of Irish in the contexts pertaining to FORMAL SETTINGS_{DON}, $W_s = 2578$, $z = -2.79$, $p < .05$ ($= .005$).

4.8.5 Factor analysis of GENUSE

Results of the PCA carried out on the third scale related to Irish language use in the community revealed two factors for each data matrix, which in combination account for, respectively, 66.26% and 72.65 % of the total variance (table 4.29). The two dimensions that emerge include the same items for each sample and appear to be linked to the inside vs. outside factor. The dimension that was labelled 'Inside' includes 6 items with loadings ranging from .86 to .61 ('In the Gaeltacht', 'On public occasions', 'At mealtimes', 'When angry or excited', 'In private occasions', 'Helping children with homework'), which are linked to a more personal and community-centred dimension; while the other 3 items appear to describe a dimension that is related to influences that are external to the personal and community sphere. The results for both samples, moreover, show how the variable 'In public occasions' loaded on two factors, thus indicating that Irish language use in this situation may be influenced by both dimensions (table 4.27).

Table 4.27: Factor analysis of GENUSE

	Factors SC (N=106)		Factors DON (N=126)	
	Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside
<i>Outside the Gaeltacht</i>	.22	.76	.40	.69
<i>In the Gaeltacht</i>	.74	.01	.75	.39
<i>In public occasions</i>	.61	.55	.68	.55
<i>At mealtimes</i>	.86	.04	.84	.26
<i>When angry or excited</i>	.75	.38	.83	.24
<i>To avoid others understanding what is being said</i>	-.17	.77	.03	.89
<i>In private occasions</i>	.80	.34	.72	.38
<i>Helping children with homework</i>	.79	-.14	.85	-.06
Eigenvalues	3.892	1.409	4.745	1.067
% of variance	48.65%	17.61%	59.31%	13.34%
Alpha	.817	.431	.900	.587

Even though two factors emerged from the PCA carried out on this scale, given the low Cronbach's alpha values obtained by the 'Outside' dimension from both the SC and the DON data matrix ($\alpha = .431$ and $\alpha = .587$, respectively), I decided to perform a MANOVA on all the 8 items included in the GENUSE scale.

4.8.6 Effect of the socio-demographic variables on GENUSE

This section will illustrate the results of the MANOVA that was carried out on the items included in the GENUSE scale, which are related to Irish language use in eight general contexts and situations.

Gender distribution of the respondents for the two study areas is displayed in table 4.28:

Table 4.28: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for GENUSE

Gender	SC	DON
Female	N= 53	N= 61
Male	N= 53	N= 62
Age	SC	DON
18-25	N= 22	N= 28
26-35	N= 17	N= 31
36-45	N= 19	N= 19
46-55	N= 19	N= 26
56-65	N= 16	N= 16

>65	N= 13	N= 6
Education	SC	DON
Primary	N= 4	N= 2
Post-primary	N= 13	N= 41
Leaving certificate	N= 20	N= 41
Vocational training	N= 16	N= 8
College	N= 17	N= 9
University	N= 36	N= 23
Version	DON	
Irish	N= 68	
English	N= 58	

The result of Box's *M* test on gender and $GENUSE_{DON}$ was significant with $p < .05$ ($=0.01$), which indicated that there was a violation of the assumption of the equality of covariance matrices. However, Levene's Test exceeded .05 for all eight items, thus confirming the assumption of equality of variances for all eight dependent variables. Moreover, using Pillai's trace, it was possible to assess that there was no significant effect of gender on Irish language use in the eight situation and contexts, $V = 0.08$, $F(8, 114) = 1.20$, $p > .05$, size effect = 0.078, observed power = 0.535. This result was further corroborated by the separate univariate ANOVAs on the outcome variables, $p > .05$, which confirmed the non-significance of gender for these dependent variables.

The results obtained for SC indicated that there was no violation of the assumption of the equality of covariance matrices. Using Pillai's trace it was possible to assess that there was no significant effect of gender on Irish language use in the contexts and situations included in $GENUSE$, $V = 0.056$, $F(8, 97) = 0.717$, $p > .05$, size effect = 0.056, observed power = 0.315.

In the case of the impact of the age factor on the choice of Irish in the eight contexts and situations included in the $GENUSE$ scale for the DON sample, Box's *M* test indicated the violation of the assumption of the equality of covariance matrices. This result was confirmed by Levene's Test for two items which did not exceed 0.05: 'At mealtimes' ($p = .014$), and 'When angry or excited' ($p = .011$). Sheffé's post-hoc test indicated that there were no significant age-related pair-wise differences. The results of the non-parametric test showed that there was a significant difference between the over 65 and the 26-35 and the 46-55 age groups in relation to the use of Irish 'At meal times'.

With regard to the influence of age on the SC sample on the use of Irish in the contexts and situations listed in the $GENUSE$ scale, there was a violation of the assumption of the equality of covariance matrices with Box's *M* test $< .05$. Results for Levene's test indicated that there was also a violation of the equality of variances with

four items with $p < .05$ ('Outside the Gaeltacht', 'In the Gaeltacht' 'At mealtimes', and 'Helping children with homework'). Sheffé's post-hoc test revealed an age-related difference between the 18-25 and the 36-45, 46-55, and 56-65 age groups. The MANOVA was not allowed to proceed and a non-parametric test was carried out. The Wilcoxon test showed that the use of Irish in the GENUSE contexts and situations differed significantly in 4 age-related pairs (leaving certificate with post-primary, vocational training, college and university).

With regard to the influence of education on GENUSE for DON, Box's M test was significant, $p < .05$. Levene's test was significant too for three items with $p < .05$: 'In public occasions', 'To avoid others understanding what is being said' and 'In private occasions'. Hence, the MANOVA was not allowed to proceed. The results of Wilcoxon's test showed that the use of Irish when 'Helping children with homework' was significant for the 'Primary' category, $W_s = 9$, $z = -2.16$, $p > .05$ ($= .031$).

The analysis of the effect of education on GENUSE for SC, with Box's M test below .05, recorded a violation of the assumption of the equality of covariance matrices. Levene's test revealed a violation of the assumption of the equality of variances for four out of the eight items: 'In the Gaeltacht', 'At mealtimes', 'When angry or excited', and 'To avoid others understanding what is being said'. Sheffé's post-hoc test identified significant age-related differences in the use of Irish 'At mealtimes' between the 'Leaving certificate' category and four other categories: 'Post-primary', 'Vocational', 'College', and 'University'. Wilcoxon test confirmed that the use of Irish 'in the Gaeltacht', 'At mealtimes' and 'When angry or excited' for the category 'leaving certificate', differs significantly when compared to 'Post-primary', 'Vocational', 'College', and 'University'.

The effect of the language version of the questionnaire was also significant with Box's M test $< .05$ and Levene's Test that showed the significance of this factor for four items out of eight with $p < .05$ ('In the Gaeltacht', 'In public occasions', 'At mealtimes' and 'In private occasions'). The non-parametric test that was carried out on GENUSE_{DON} revealed that the choice of the language version of the questionnaire was not significant for the use of Irish in the contexts and situations included in GENUSE.

4.8.7 Factor analysis and MANOVA of the home domain scales

The PCA performed on the two home domain scales revealed that they appear to be one-dimensional with all 8 items loading onto one single factor (table 4.29).

Table 4.29: Factor analysis of USEDHOME

	SC (N=131)	DON (N=130)
Between mother and father	.86	.84
Between mother and children	.86	.85
Between father and children	.84	.80
By children with each other	.77	.85
By parents with relatives	.92	.81
By parents with friends	.85	.83
By grandparents with grandchildren	.86	.83
By grandparents with parents	.90	.86
Eigenvalues	5.885	5.551
% of variance	73.57%	69.38%
Alpha	.947	.936

Therefore, given the one-dimensional nature of this scale, the 8 items comprising the scale were analysed by means of a MANOVA.

Table 4.30 displays the distribution of the two samples according to the selected socio-demographic variables:

Table 4.30: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for USEDHOME

Gender	SC	DON
Female	N= 67	N= 66
Male	N= 64	N= 61
Age	SC	DON
18-25	N= 33	N= 30
26-35	N= 22	N= 31
36-45	N= 27	N= 19
46-55	N= 21	N= 26
56-65	N= 18	N= 14
>65	N= 10	N= 7
Education	SC	DON
Primary	N= 3	N= 2
Post-primary	N= 15	N= 41
Leaving certificate	N= 23	N= 41
Vocational training	N= 19	N= 8
College	N= 23	N= 9
University	N= 48	N= 23
Version	DON	
Irish	N= 70	
English	N= 60	

The assumption of the equality of covariance matrices for the eight items of USEDHOME and gender for DON and SC was violated with Box's M test $<.05$. For DON, Levene's Test showed that the assumption of equality of variance for each dependent variable was violated for one of the items, 'Between father and children' ($p=.049$). Thus, the MANOVA was not allowed to proceed. However, Pillai's trace showed that, in reality, there was no significant effect of gender on the use of Irish in the home of origin, $V=0.04$, $F(8, 118)=0.64$, $p>.05$. This result was confirmed by separate ANOVAs which ruled out the significance of gender for 'Between father and children' ($p>.05$). In the case of the SC sample, the results of Levene's test with $p>.05$ showed that the assumption of the equality of variance was not violated. Pillai's trace confirmed this result ($V=0.072$, $F(8, 122)=1.184$, $p>.05$, partial eta squared = 0.072, observed power = 0.528).

With regard to the effect of age on Irish language use in the family of origin in DON, Box's M test was significant with $p<.05$. Levene's Test showed that the violation of the assumption of equality of variance for each dependent variable occurred for three variables: 'By parents with relatives' ($p=.008$), 'By grandparents with grandchildren' ($p=.023$), and 'By grandparents with parents' ($p=.006$). However, Pillai's trace indicated that age is not significant for DON, $V=0.337$, $F(40, 600)=1.085$, $p>.05$, size effect = 0.067, observed power = 0.961.

The results of Box's M test for SC was significant with $p<.05$. Likewise, Levene's test showed that seven out of the eight dependent variables included in USEDHOME were significant with $p<.05$:

Table 4.31: Levene's test for USEDHOME_{SC}

Levene's test				
	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Between mother and father	7.524	5	125	.000
Between mother and children	6.027	5	125	.000
Between father and children	3.828	5	125	.003
By children with each other	2.011	5	125	.082
By parents with relatives	2.388	5	125	.042

By parents with friends	2.473	5	125	.036
By grandparents with grandchildren	2.803	5	125	.020
By grandparents with parents	3.101	5	125	.011

Given the violation of the assumptions, the MANOVA was not allowed to proceed. While Sheffé's post-hoc test showed no significant age-related pair-wise differences, the non-parametric test confirmed that these differences are significant.

The analysis of the main effects of education on the language chosen by the respondents in their families of origin in DON shows that two violations occurred: Box's *M* test was significant with $p < .05$; Levene's Test exceeded .05 for 6 variables out of 8 excluding 'By parents with friends' ($p = .004$) and 'By parents with grandparents' ($p = .004$). The one-way ANOVA revealed that there was no significant multivariate main effect, Pillai's trace = 0.285, $F(40, 595) = 0.899$, $p > .05$, partial eta squared = 0.057, observed power = 0.905. Moreover, Sheffé's post-hoc test revealed no significant education-related pair-wise difference in the use of Irish in the family of origin.

Box's *M* test for education on SC was significant too. Levene's test showed the violation of the assumption of the equality of variance for seven out of the eight dependent variables. Sheffé's post-hoc test indicated an education-related pair-wise difference between 'Leaving certificate' and 'Post-primary' and 'Vocational training' in relation to only one variable, 'By children with each other'. Given the violation of the assumptions, a non-parametric test was carried out. Wilcoxon's test confirmed that these differences are significant.

The results from Box's *M* test on USEDHOME and the language version of the questionnaire for DON revealed a violation of the assumption of equality of covariances ($p < .05$). Three items violated the assumption of the equivalence of variance with $p < .05$: 'Between father and children' ($p = .049$), 'By children with each other' ($p = .003$), 'By grandparents with grandchildren' ($p = .008$). However, the non-parametric test showed that there was a significant relationship between the language chosen to complete the questionnaire and the use of Irish 'Between mother and father', 'Between mother and children' and 'By grandparents with grandchildren'.

The results of the PCA carried out on the second home domain scale, NOWHOME (table 4.32), show that it was possible to extract two factors from the DON data matrix, which account for 83.29% of the total variance. The items loading onto the first factor are 'Between mother and children', 'Between father and children',

‘By children with each other’, and ‘By grandparents with grandchildren’. The second factor includes the two remaining items: ‘Between self and spouse’ and ‘By children with friends’.

The MANOVA carried out on the USEDHOME scale showed that all the socio-demographic variables, gender, age, education, and version, have an impact on the use of Irish in the family of origin both in SC and DON.

Table 4.32: Factor analysis of NOWHOME

	Factors DON (N=60)		Factor SC (N=81)
	1	2	1
Between self and spouse	.07	.97	.72
Between mother and children	.82	.40	.79
Between father and children	.73	.51	.65
By children with each other	.91	.10	.83
By grandparents with grandchildren	.89	.14	.72
By children with friends	.43	.78	.67
Eigenvalues	3.909	1.088	3.211
% of variance	65.16%	18.13%	53.51%
Alpha	.894	.818	.814

With regard to SC, the 6 items included in this scale tend to cluster around one single factor, therefore, even though two underlying dimensions seem to emerge from the PCA of the DON data matrix, on the basis of the results for SC, I decided to carry out a MANOVA on the entire scale. The results of this analysis are presented in the following section.

4.8.8 The influence of socio-demographic variables on NOWHOME

In this section I will present the results of the MANOVA performed with the aim of ascertaining the influence of gender, age, education, and the choice of the language version of the questionnaire (only for the DON sample) on Irish language use in the current family.

The distribution of the two samples according to the selected socio-demographic variables is as follows:

Table 4.33: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables for NOWHOME

Gender	SC	DON
Female	N= 38	N= 32
Male	N= 43	N= 26
Age	SC	DON
18-25	N= 10	N= 1
26-35	N= 11	N= 14
36-45	N= 18	N= 12
46-55	N= 21	N= 21
56-65	N= 14	N= 9
>65	N= 7	N= 3
Education	SC	DON
Primary	N= 2	N= 0
Post-primary	N= 12	N= 23
Leaving certificate	N= 6	N= 15
Vocational training	N= 15	N= 5
College	N= 15	N= 6
University	N= 31	N= 10
Version	DON	
Irish	N= 38	
English	N= 22	

The analysis of the influence of gender on the use of Irish in the current family in the DON study area indicated that Box's M test was significant with $p < .05$. Levene's test revealed that a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance occurred for the item 'By children with each other'. Pillai's trace indicated that there was no significant effect of gender on NOWHOME_{DON}, $V = 0.108$, $F(6, 51) = 1.030$, $p > .05$ ($= .417$), size effect = 0.108, observed power = 0.368. Given the violation of the assumptions for 'By children with each other' the non-parametric, Wilcoxon, test did not confirm the significance of gender on the use of Irish 'By children with each other'.

The result of Box's M test ($p < .05$) for gender and NOWHOME_{SC} shows a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance, while, according to Levene's test, there was no violation of the assumption of the equality of variance ($p > .05$ for all six variables). Using Pillai's trace, there was no significant effect of gender on the use of Irish in the current family in the SC study area, $V = 0.024$, $F(6, 74) = 0.307$, $p = .931$, size effect = 0.024, observed power = 0.129.

With Box's M test for age and NOWHOME_{DON} below .05, a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance occurred. Levene's test revealed that the assumption of the equality of variances was violated by one of the six items included in NOWHOME: 'Between self and spouse' ($p < .001$). Pillai's trace indicated

that there was no significant effect of age on the use of Irish in the current family, $V=0.451$, $F(30, 265)=0.877$, $p>.05$ ($=.656$), partial eta squared = 0.090, observed power = 0.795. The non-parametric test carried out on age and 'Between self and spouse' showed that age is not significant for the use of Irish between the respondents and their spouse.

With regard to the influence of age on NOWHOMESC, there was a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance with Box's M test $<.05$. Levene's test was significant for three out of the six variables included in NOWHOMESC: 'Between self and spouse', 'Between father and children', and 'By grandparents with grandchildren'. Using Pillai's trace it was possible to assess that there was no significant effect of age on the use of Irish in the current family, $V=0.359$, $F(30, 370)=0.953$, $p>.05$ ($=.54$), partial eta squared = 0.072, observed power = 0.849. The non-parametric test carried out on 'Between self and spouse', 'Between father and children', and 'By grandparents with grandchildren' revealed that differences were significant between the over 65 and the 26-35 and the 46-55 age groups in relation to the use of Irish 'Between father and children'; and between the over 65 and the 26-35 age groups in relation to the use of Irish 'Between self and spouse'.

The results of Box's M test (p) and Levene's test for education and NOWHOMEDON indicated that Box's M test was significant with $p<.05$, while Levene's test was significant for three out of the six variables included in NOWHOMEDON: 'Between self and spouse', 'Between mother and children', and 'By children with friends'. Using Pillai's trace, there was a significant effect of education on the use of Irish in the respondents' current family, $V=0.729$, $F(24, 208)=1.931$, $p=.008$, partial eta squared = 0.182, observed power = 0.990. The non-parametric test that was carried out on 'Between self and spouse', 'Between mother and children', and 'By children with friends' showed that there is a significant use of Irish 'Between self and spouse' in relation specifically to 'University' as opposed to 'Post-primary' and 'Leaving certificate'.

With Box's M test being $<.05$ there was a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance, whereas Levene's test showed that the violation of the assumption of the equality of variances occurred for two out of the six variables in NOWHOMESC: 'Between self and spouse' and 'Between father and children'. Using Pillai's trace, there was no significant effect of education on the use of Irish in the current family, $V=0.302$, $F(30, 370)=0.793$, $p=.776$, partial eta squared = 0.060, observed power = 0.750. The non-parametric test carried out on 'Between self and

spouse' and 'Between father and children' showed no significant effect of education on these two variables.

The analysis of the influence of the choice of the language version on NOWHOME_{DON} showed that a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance occurred with Box's *M* test $<.05$. The results of Levene's test showed that there was a violation of the assumption of the equality of variance for two out of the six variables in NOWHOME: 'Between mother and children' and 'By grandparents with grandchildren'. Using Pillai's trace, there was no significant effect of the choice of the language version on NOWHOME_{DON}, $V = 0.08$, $F(6, 53) = 0.765$, $p > .05$ ($= .601$), partial eta squared = 0.08, observed power = 0.276. Wilcoxon's test on 'Between mother and children' and 'By grandparents with grandchildren' showed that the influence of the choice of the language version on these two variables is not significant.

The results obtained for these scales shows that the family domain is an increasingly threatened stronghold of Irish language use and intergenerational transmission. Previous studies have shown that in Gaeltacht communities, the use of Irish in the home has been decreasing consistently (Harris *et al.*, 2006).

Level of use are higher in SC, followed by DON and PF. By comparing the results obtained for USEDHOME and NOWHOME from the SC and the DON samples it was possible to detect that in DON the use of Irish in specific role-relationships (e.g. Irish language use between mother/father and children and parents) is increasingly at risk. This may reflect a situation in which the growing number of non-Irish speakers who immigrate in the Gaeltacht is negatively affecting the transmission of the language to the younger generations (Ó Riagáin, 1997, 2001).

4.9 Irish in the media

The questionnaire also contained a section devoted to Irish in the media that was developed with the aim of assessing the reasons behind the respondents' motivations for (not) watching and/or listening to programmes in Irish and for reading in Irish or not. As Oskamp (1991: 133) points out:

the media do not simply transmit information. By selecting, emphasizing, and interpreting particular events, and by publicizing people's reactions to those events, they help to structure the nature of "reality" and to define the crucial issues of the day, which in turn impels the public to form attitudes on these new issues.

This is the reason why another testing arena was developed within this context with specific relation to the Irish language, i.e. the impact of the media on the maintenance of the Irish language and on young people's attitudes.

This section was divided into two parts. Respondents were invited to choose from a set number of pre-coded answers. They could choose any number of answers they regarded appropriate to their own experience and opinions. The first dealt with questions regarding whether respondents listened to and/or watched television and/or radio programmes in Irish and the reasons why they did or did not do. Six statements were offered as plausible reasons for listening to and/or watching programmes in Irish. They ranged from the quality of such programmes to the information provided by them. Some of the five reasons offered to justify a negative answer to the above-mentioned question included: poor quality of broadcast programmes in Irish, how well they cater for the viewers' interests, etc. The second part dealt with the reading of magazines and books in Irish. For those respondents who answered that they read in Irish, five attitudinal items were offered to justify this positive answer and the same applied to the reasons given to justify a negative answer.

According to the results obtained from the first group of pre-coded answers (which contained six items which applied both to radio and/or television programmes in Irish) it was possible to ascertain that the large majority of respondents watch and listen to programmes in Irish with a slight preference towards television programmes. More specifically, that 91% of the SC sample, 70% of the DON respondents and 88% of the PF sample listen to Irish language radio programmes. With regard to Irish language TV programmes, again the responses given by the sample in Galway indicate that 95% of the respondents watch such programmes, as well as 67% in Donegal and 88% in Belfast.

As illustrated in table 4.34, after answering whether they watched/listened to Irish language programmes, respondents were then asked to choose one or more of the options provided in the questionnaire as an explanation for watching and/or listening to programmes in Irish or for not doing so.

Table 4.34: Reasons for watching/listening to radio and TV programmes in Irish.

Label	Why do you listen and/or watch programmes in Irish?	Why don't you listen and/or watch programmes in Irish?
IDENTITY	<i>a-</i> I can identify better with programmes in Irish	<i>a-</i> I don't like the quality of programmes in Irish
EASIER TO UNDERSTAND	<i>b-</i> It is easier for me to understand programmes in Irish	<i>b-</i> I don't identify with programmes in Irish
CATER FOR INTERESTS	<i>c-</i> Programmes in Irish cater better for my interests	<i>c-</i> The information provided in programmes in English is more accurate
BETTER QUALITY	<i>d-</i> I like the quality of programs in Irish	<i>d-</i> Programmes in Irish do not entertain me
ENTERTAINMENT	<i>e-</i> Programmes in Irish entertain me	<i>e-</i> Programmes in Irish do not cater well for my interests
MORE RELIABLE	<i>f-</i> Programmes in Irish provide more reliable information	

If we were to redraw this list of items in favour or against watching and/or listening to programmes in Irish in order of importance, i.e. according to the preference granted by the respondents in the three study areas where the questionnaire was administered, then they should be rearranged according to the following listing:

Table 4.35: Reasons given by the three samples for watching/listening to radio and TV programmes in Irish

SC	DON	PF
IDENTITY	IDENTITY	IDENTITY
ENTERTAINMENT	MORE RELIABLE	ENTERTAINMENT
CATER FOR INTERESTS	BETTER QUALITY	BETTER QUALITY
BETTER QUALITY-	EASIER TO UNDERSTAND	CATER FOR INTERESTS
MORE RELIABLE	CATER FOR INTERESTS	EASIER TO UNDERSTAND
EASIER TO UNDERSTAND	ENTERTAINMENT	MORE RELIABLE

The South Connemara respondents rated identity, the level of entertainment and the fact that Irish language programmes cater better for their interests as the main reasons for watching them.

In Donegal, people choose to watch and listen to programmes in Irish because they can identify better with them, because the information they provide is more

reliable. Moreover, they like their quality, find them easier to understand and more entertaining as well as catering better for their particular needs.

In Belfast, the respondents tended to identify better with such programmes, found them both entertaining and of good quality, and thought that they catered better for their interests, whereas very few people expressed a preference for the ‘easier to understand’ option.

As for the reasons for not watching and/or listening to programmes in Irish, the main explanations given had to do with the fact that the respondents of the SC sample did not like the quality of such programmes, did not find them entertaining, and felt that they did not cater for their interests. Less importance was given to other factors such as the fact that they don’t identify with them and that they do not find them more reliable than programmes in the English language.

In Donegal, factors such as identity, higher reliability of English programmes and lack of interest in Irish programmes were the main reasons for not watching/listening to them. The answers given by the PF sample, by contrast, are not comparable since only two respondents said that they do not watch/listen to programmes in Irish.

As for the use of Irish in the printed media, respondents could choose from two lists each containing five reasons for reading or not reading magazines and/or books in Irish (see table 4.36).

Table 4.36: Reasons for reading magazines and books in Irish

	Why do you read magazines and/or books in Irish?	Why don’t you read magazines and/or books in Irish?
Why?		
MORE COMFORTABLE	a- I feel more comfortable reading in Irish	a- I feel uncomfortable reading in Irish
IDENTITY	b- I identify better with information/events related in Irish	b- I don’t identify with news/events related in Irish
CATER FOR INTERESTS	c- Publications in Irish deal with those things that most interest me	c- Publications in English cater better for my interests
BETTER QUALITY	d- I like the quality of publications in Irish	d- I don’t like the quality of publications in Irish
UNDERSTANDING	e- I understand better what is written in Irish	e- It is not easy for me to understand them

The number of respondents in the three study areas who stated that they read magazines and/or books (without specifying how many times per day, week or month)

in Irish was slightly lower. The lowest percentages were recorded in Donegal with 63% of the sample reporting that they read magazines and books in Irish. In the South Connemara Gaeltacht and in Belfast percentages were higher with, respectively, 64% and 81% of the two samples reporting that they read magazines and books in Irish.

When asked to give one or more reasons for doing so, each of the three samples once again chose different options to motivate their choice. As can be seen in table 4.37, the SC sample prioritised identity and quality as the main reasons for reading in Irish, followed by the fact that such publications cater better for their interests and that they feel more comfortable and are more likely to understand what is written in Irish. The DON sample, on the contrary, gave more importance to the fact that they feel more comfortable reading in Irish since publications in Irish cater better for their interests and they are more likely to identify with what is written in Irish. At the same time, better understanding and the quality of such publications ranked lower in their list of priorities. Finally, the PF respondents stated that they feel more comfortable reading in Irish as they can identify better with and understand more easily what is written in this language. Quality and the fact that these publications may cater better for their interests are the options that received less attention by this sample.

Table 4.37: Reasons given by the three samples for reading in Irish

SC	DON	PF
IDENTITY	MORE COMFORTABLE	MORE COMFORTABLE
QUALITY	INTERESTS	IDENTITY
INTERESTS	IDENTITY	UNDERSTANDING
MORE COMFORTABLE	UNDERSTANDING	QUALITY
UNDERSTANDING	QUALITY	INTERESTS

Those SC respondents who, in their turn, stated that they don't read in Irish justified their statement by stating that they prefer the quality of English-language publications and that they don't identify with Irish language programmes. In Donegal, priority was given to the fact that the respondents do not feel comfortable reading in Irish and that they prefer the quality of English publications. In Belfast, priority was given to the fact that they do not identify with them, perhaps because they do not find them easy to understand and they do not feel that they really cater for their interests.

4.9.1 *Attitudes towards Irish in the media*

The block of the questionnaire devoted to Irish in the media ended with two attitudinal statements aimed at measuring the three samples' attitudes towards the impact of the media on the maintenance and the influence they exert on young people's attitudes towards Irish in the Gaeltacht and in their community.

While both the DON and SC samples agreed with the fact that the media do indeed have an important influence in the maintenance of the Irish language (with 70% in the former and 85% in the latter), no disagreement was expressed by the PF sample with 31% of the respondents stating that they agreed with the statement and 69% noting that they strongly agreed with it.

With regard to the levels of agreement and disagreement expressed towards the second attitudinal statement, once again the levels of agreement were very high with the highest degree of agreement expressed by Donegal (89%; Belfast 81% and South Connemara 78%).

The results linked to the use of Irish media and attitudes towards them show that generally speaking respondents with high percentages obtained both for the broadcast and the printed media, as well as positive attitudes towards them. These findings were confirmed by the analysis of the interview data. Studies carried out after the present one (MORI, 2004; Ó Laoire, 2007) reproduce similar findings and underline the crucial role that Irish language media may play in offering another domain for language use beside the family and the limited community domains where the language is used more often.

4.10 Relatives

The final block of the questionnaire included questions aimed at assessing Irish language use with emigrated relatives. The first three questions were binary questions with a yes/no answer aimed at assessing whether the respondents had relatives living abroad:

- Do you have other relatives?
- Did any of your relatives emigrate?
- Do you keep in contact with them?

These questions were then followed by other questions with multiple choice answers or with a 5-point Likert-type answer that were included in order to ascertain the preferred mode of communication and the language used to communicate with relatives abroad.

- To write
To phone
Both

- Only English Mostly English English and Irish equally Mostly Irish Only Irish

- Only English Mostly English English and Irish equally Mostly Irish Only Irish

- Yes No

- My relatives have forgotten their Irish

In answer to the question on whether the respondents had relatives, a majority from all three samples answered that they did, (SC=96.6%, DON=94.3%, PF93.8%). Moreover 95.7% from SC, 83.6% from DON, and 53.3% from PF stated that some of their relatives emigrated and SC=92%, DON=74%, and PF=100% that they keep in contact with them.

As regards the language used in communicating with emigrated relatives (table 4.38), in the SC sample 40% reported a high use of Irish and 34% a moderate use of this language, while 26% of respondents reported using English more frequently. Percentages for the other two samples indicate that the tendency is to use English on a more frequent basis when writing (DON=49.4%; PF=55.5%). Irish appears to be used more frequently by respondents from the DON sample when communicating over the phone (47.3%) while respondents from the PF sample prefer English (62.8%).

Table 4.38: Language used in communicating with emigrated relatives (percentages)

In writing	DON	PF	On the telephone	DON	PF	SC
Only English	24.7	33.3	Only English	15.5	27.3	11
Mostly English	24.7	22.2	Mostly English	13.6	45.5	15
Irish and English Equally	23.5	22.2	Irish and English equally	23.6	18.2	34
Mostly Irish	18.8	0	Mostly Irish	25.5	0	21
Only Irish	8.2	22.2	Only Irish	21.8	9	19

The majority of respondents from all three areas stated that the form of communication does not influence the choice of language they use to communicate with their emigrated relatives (SC=58.5%; DON=55%; PF=55.5%).

It is important to note however that in the years that have passed since the data were gathered in the three study areas, communication over the Internet (e.g. Skype, Facebook, Messenger, blogs, etc.) has developed dramatically thanks to the diffusion of broadband connections. Therefore, it would certainly be interesting to investigate whether this development in communication represents an incentive to using Irish.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an in-depth statistical analysis of Irish language attitudes and use in the three study areas. The analysis of frequencies shows how reported levels of use in the community tend to be lower when they are interlocutor-based, while they tend to be higher when the role-relationship is place- and context-based. This indicates first of all that the respondents were well aware of the different interactions involved in the latter two. Moreover, they also indicate that in SC there are higher levels of Irish language compared to the other two study areas.

The factor analysis on the attitude and language use scale simplified the data structure by extracting a number of factors that were then used to assess, by means of multivariate analysis, the impact of gender, age, education and the choice of the language version of the questionnaire on both attitudes and language use.

While on a more general level, findings indicate that there are differences between what the respondents from the three areas think and feel about the different dimensions of attitudes included in the present study, the MANOVA highlighted how different socio-demographic variables influence these attitudes and language use. The variables that have a greater impact on respondents from the SC and the DON areas are age and education.

As will be discussed more in detail in Chapter 6, the findings on attitudes towards the Irish language and Irish language policies compare with some of the surveys conducted in Ireland (CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1984 and 1994; Ó Riagáin). Results related to levels of Irish language use reflect those of these surveys, but contrast with others (e.g. Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009).

The following chapter will provide a description of the data gathered in the third stage of the present study by presenting excerpts from the interviews conducted in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

Chapter 5. Analysis of interview data

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes data from the semi-structured interviews carried out between November and December of 2004 in the town of Galway and in Carraroe (in the South Connemara Gaeltacht) in the Republic of Ireland, and in Derry, Northern Ireland (see the map displaying the location of the study areas in §3.9).

Although great effort was invested in trying to contact informants in the same study areas where the questionnaire was distributed, this was not always possible. The selection of these locations for this stage of the study was based on preliminary contacts with universities and local associations (see §3.6.2), however only the contacts made in Derry, Galway and Carraroe accepted to be interviewed, and I did not succeed in making any useful contacts in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

Sections 5.2.1 to 5.2.8 will provide a detailed description of the questions that were asked in the course of the interviews and will present a selection of excerpts that will help illustrate the informants' opinions on the issues that were the focus of study (see Appendix E for the interview protocol).

Each informant is identified with the initial of the place where the interview took place and the number of the interview, thus, C2 denotes the second informant that was interviewed in Carraroe.

5.2 The informants

Of the 19 informants, 16 were females and three were males. The great majority belongs to the 18-25 age group, a characteristic based on the fact that, with the exception of only one informant, they were students. Most of them had been born in a town near the Gaeltacht (the only exception being a young woman who had been born in the USA and a woman who was born in Derry) and grew up in a Gaeltacht area (except, again for the two informants mentioned above).¹

5.3 Personal experience with Irish in education

All interviews started out with a question on the informants' personal experience with Irish in education. According to how thorough and exhaustive their answers were,

¹ See Appendix I for a socio-linguistic profile of interviewees.

the informants were probed with other questions aimed at understanding how and what they felt in relation to their Irish language education (if they had had one) such as;

- Did you study through Irish at primary and secondary level?
- What was the language spoken in the schoolyard?
- Can you think of any advantages or disadvantages of an education through the medium of Irish?

The answers given to these first questions varied quite substantially in terms of length. Some informants gave particularly articulate answers while others gave extremely short, almost monosyllabic responses. Whenever the latter occurred, I tried to prompt the informant so as to get a more eloquent answer, however if after this prompting the person being interviewed did not expand more his/her answer I never insisted and tried to probe the topic at a later moment.

All the informants talked about their experience with Irish in education in positive terms. Since most of them were native speakers who had grown up in an Irish-speaking family environment, they remarked that it was natural for them to study at both primary and secondary level through the medium of Irish. For some of the informants, the first contact they had with English took place at the beginning of their schooling as the following extracts show:

C7: Yeah, I was raised in Irish, I spoke it all the time from national school up to now.

C5: Yeah, I grew up with Irish, and I learned Irish when I was young. And in the house just all Irish we'd talk, unless somebody English came in, we'd do half and half. And during school, primary school, I learned how to talk better Irish, and plus I started to learn English, that's when I started to learn English, in primary school. And all through primary school me and my friends we'd be always talking in Irish, inside and outside school. And going up through second level, we learned Irish more, got in depth, and just learned Irish, everybody.

C3: Well, pretty much since I started it's been through Irish. Primary school up to secondary school all the lessons were conducted like through Irish. So it was easier, I was comfortable, since I can speak... I'm a native speaker. But outside of school, in the play area and so there was a lot of English spoken. So, there was Irish inside and English outside with the kids.

One of the main differences that emerged from the answers of the informants is related to the language spoken in the school yard. While some stated that Irish was spoken by the children both inside and outside school, others observed that the language spoken outside the classroom was English. The main reason given to explain this tendency was that English was considered to be more prestigious and a means to rebel against the imposition of Irish as the following show:

C3: I suppose because it was imposed so strongly, the Irish, that it was a sort of rebellion to speak English. It was a cooler language, you know what I mean? I suppose from television and things like that, it was seen as being the better language.

G2 gives a very detailed explanation of the implications of the passage to secondary school and how it marked a shift towards English, not only outside the school but also inside its walls. He talks about how the use of Irish and English has changed since he attended school and how he felt about the shift towards English experienced when he started attending secondary school, which marked a point of no return in terms of the use of Irish with his peers:

G2: Okay. First, starting with primary school? Ok, I went to a primary school in the Gaeltacht which was all through Irish and at the time I felt that they were much more strict about speaking Irish in primary school than in secondary school. And that may have changed, since, I'm not sure because speaking to people a bit younger than me, you know, they say that there is a lot more English spoken in the primary schools now. When I was there if the teacher heard you speaking English they'd complain that you had to speak Irish. There was always a few people in the class who didn't have Irish from home, so they spoke it, but they were more comfortable with English. It was kind of strange because with them, they would normally speak English, so if there was a group of people and they were there, then people might turn to English. Then in secondary school, everything changed. It was really strange. Because suddenly I found that with friends that I had from the time I was, you know, very young. Suddenly they started speaking to me in English when we went to secondary school, even though it was in the Gaeltacht as well and it was supposed to be an Irish speaking school. But I think the biggest difference was that the teachers in the

secondary school, a lot of them weren't native speakers or they didn't have huge interest in Irish, so they weren't going to force us to speak it, so there was a lot more English being spoken. And I think also because of the age that we were at, you know there was a kind of pressure to speak it. At first I thought it was very strange, because it was people that I knew all my life. I also find that if you're used to speaking one language with someone it's very hard to change. But then after a while I got used to speaking to my friends in English, then it was very hard to speak to them in Irish. So now, after secondary school I have friends that I met in secondary school that are from the Gaeltacht, but I speak to them, I am more comfortable speaking to them in English. It's crazy really, but it takes a huge effort to kind of, to change the language that you know somebody in or whatever. A big problem I think with the secondary school is just that a lot of teachers come in from other areas and they don't live in the Gaeltacht so they come in say from Galway, they travel maybe 20-30 miles to work, but it's just work for them, they don't know anything about the area. They have no interest in the language really, a lot of them, I mean it's generalizing, but a lot of them don't really have a huge interest. And I found it was a bit of an insult to people from the Gaeltacht that these teachers were coming in and they'd kind of, sometimes they'd just teach through English, which was bad enough. But then even if they made a big effort to kind of talk through Irish, they'd come up with words that didn't make any sense to us. And the grammar was wrong and it was so obvious, but they'd make us write stuff down, and we knew it was wrong.

G2 also brings to the fore two important elements that have an influence on the choice of language spoken in the school domain. The first one is the negative influence on Irish use represented by the presence in the classroom of children who do not speak the language. Harris (2006) explains this situation in terms of the high number of students from English-speaking homes or from outside the Gaeltacht and especially as the children progress to secondary education. The second element is represented by the role played by teachers who are not Irish native speakers and who, by not 'enforcing' the use of Irish both inside and outside the school, actually facilitate the shift towards English. Mac Donnacha *et al.* (2005) ascribe the cause of this problem to the difficulties

that Gaeltacht schools have in recruiting teachers with native-like fluency and competence in Irish as well as to the lack of appropriate teaching material.

Despite such negative influences, quite a few informants talked about the destigmatization of the Irish language which has been brought about, as G8 points out, by the establishment of the Irish language television broadcasting service which was launched as *Teilifís na Gaeilge* or TnaG in 1996 and later renamed TG4:

G8: Towards, maybe teenage years, people had a tendency to speak more English than Irish and it was a bit unpopular to speak Irish, but then once the TV station started, it kind of became cooler so more people started to speak Irish again. Now most people my own age they would speak Irish.

The answers given to the question on the advantages or disadvantages represented by an education through the medium of Irish showed that informants tended to regard it as mostly an advantage in terms of, for instance, better chances of employment in Gaeltacht areas and of growing up with two languages:

C2: Well, not pros and cons as much, but you see in countries like England and France and everywhere, they do education through their own language, so I don't see why we can't do it as well.

C3: Advantages, I suppose. Because there's two languages, and if you can learn to write in both languages it's a big advantage for employment and I think if you can write accurately in the language, there's a better chance of employment in your own area. You won't have to move, you know.

C5: Advantages, I suppose, if you had, I don't know, Irish exams or whatever, I'd say you'd have more of information on the Irish better than the English, because we were brought up with Irish, so that's one advantage. Plus, some people, it's hard for them to pick up other languages if they don't have Irish.

G9: Well, I think it's great, because you have two languages. You have English and Irish, and I don't know, I think it's good to keep the language alive, really.

The disadvantages mentioned by the informants were not linked to receiving schooling in Irish per se but to the scarce educational material in Irish available to them while in school (as already noted above by G2), as well as the lack of opportunities to use Irish either after secondary school or more broadly outside of Ireland:

G6: It was the terms, in a way you couldn't, there wasn't all those terms for scientific, you know I did biology through research and that kind of thing and sometimes it's a bit difficult, I mean I know there are words now, but there's no books, actually, so no books. The text books used to have to be in English as well. So that is kind of, you know, and then they expect you to sit your exams through Irish and it used to get a bit confusing.

G8: Pros are that speaking Irish the whole time improves your knowledge of the language. And cons are if you go to, some universities don't have subjects through Irish. Like in Galway you can do sociology and political history and things like that through Irish, but in other universities you can't. And if you have a background of schooling through Irish, it can be difficult to change. If you have all the terminology learnt through Irish, it can be difficult to turn to another language

C5: That it's not well known. It is in Ireland, but outside Ireland not that many people have Irish, so if you're going on holidays you'd have to speak English. So it's kind of a disadvantage that way.

D1: Yes, definitely yeah. Again, when it came to most of the textbooks were in English, but we were being taught in Irish. If we were asked to go home and study we had a problem with the English, because we had no English. The only English we were getting was when we went somewhere miles away from home. We didn't have TVs in the Gaeltacht at that time. Up until the age of 16, I know as a truth, we didn't have TV, so we weren't getting any chance.

The positive influence of Irish language media is quite significant because as Ó Laoire (2007) observes, the fact that young people (as is the case for this and his sample) declare that they watch Irish-language television is a testament to the growing influence it may have in “effecting change in Irish people’s language behaviour” (181). Moreover, as some of the informants pointed out by giving the example of the cartoons

that are dubbed in Irish “TV can transmit positive attitudes to Irish through youthful vibrant imagery and discourses and ensures that the home is no longer the sole domain of English” (*ibid.*: 181)

5.4 The current situation and the future of the Irish language

The second and third questions asked the informants to give their opinion on, respectively, the current situation and the future of the Irish language. In general, these questions did not require much prompting, however, when required, this question was augmented by further questioning as illustrated below:

- Is Irish a healthy/strong language?
- How do you see the language in 20 to 50 years?

The informants’ answers with regard to the current situation of the Irish language were quite divided. Approximately half of the people interviewed gave answers such as the following reflecting the fact that Irish is not only gaining strength but that it is enjoying a revival:

C1: It is, yeah. There’s a lot of work being done now to bring it back in to everyday life, and Connemara and things, and trying to get it into the cities as well. I think it’s on the up now. It’s on the up.

G3: Well, I think it’s going through something of a renaissance at the moment. I mean, in the last Census it said that there was one and a half million people who can speak Irish to some level. Now of course there’s only at the most 400,000 who can speak it fluently. I think that at the moment, it has a new lease of life because I think in the last ten years, people have been more interested in their culture, and the same thing happened at the beginning of the last century but, I mean it’s seen more of a good thing now like. My father, when my father was my age, Irish and Irish culture was associated with poverty, now you get that attitude still from some older people, but to the young people it’s quite acceptable to have. I think we realize more these days how important it is.

This new strength appears to arise at least partially from the positive role played by Irish broadcasting media:

G2: *I don't know, well it's changed. I think everyone probably said it's changed through the television, the Irish language TV station, TG4, because I suppose that was 1996 when that started. I think it gave Irish a slightly different image and, I don't know, it brought a lot of people to the area, maybe working with television, and they wouldn't necessarily have to be from the Gaeltacht, but they were a lot of young people and kind of trendy people coming to the area and it gave kind of Irish a new life, maybe. It's kind of strange at the moment. It's hard to know how it could go.*

The other half of the people interviewed expressed a more negative outlook by commenting on the likelihood of a quite imminent and inevitable death of the Irish language due to the dwindling number of speakers:

C2: *It's dying down, I'd say, there's not many people speaking it.*

C5: *In my opinion, I'd say it's dying at some stage, because there's not that many people speaking Irish any more. For example, the place where I come from, there's loads of English people coming into the little village, and they're not learning much Irish, so the Irish is going down in the village, and there's more English coming in than the Irish. So, where I'm staying, is Irish is dying in our village, because there's not that many people speaking it anymore. The kids think that it's not cool to speak in Irish and they speak in English.*

G6: *Yeah, I suppose less and less people are speaking Irish. I do find that there are still a lot of young people that can speak Irish and I know a lot of my friends who might not speak Irish that much, but we all, like I know this sounds weird, but we all are still very proud of being able to speak Irish. And also if I ever have kids or if anyone wanted to raise their kids with Irish it's just kind of, I don't know why, but...*

The overwhelming influence of the English language spoken by returning emigrants and their offspring who chose to go back to Ireland and settle in the Gaeltacht (Akutagawa, 1986) was another issue raised by the informants:

D1: *In the Gaeltacht? The current situation, sadly enough, the older generation, I'd say from the three through to the older ones, ourselves, over*

25, and then the third are the next generation. They're not speaking the Irish language at all. For the simple reason, they have Irish, but the sad thing is the Irish is dying in the Gaeltacht, because parents aren't emphasizing enough on their children. It's not cool to speak Irish any more, it's English, as the spoken language. So it's dying. And then in the schools as well, it's interfering with education for the simple reason that with so many people now who left to emigrate, they're coming back, they're building houses, you know, from where they left, it's like resetting their roots. They're coming back with their families – by all means, I mean happy days like, but they don't have any Irish. They're going into classrooms where the population there's only one to nine families, you know what I mean, it's not like there's a full class like, so they're holding on to a wee child who is fluent, or even - as I said there's three stages, fluent, there's meddling, and there's a wee bit weak, you know. And class has to be halted to turn and educate the English speakers as well. Again, I'm not condemning, but I'm just saying how it's affecting the Irish speakers.

The question on the future of the Irish language elicited briefer and less detailed answers. Generally speaking, informants seemed to be sharing the same hope that the language will survive:

C2: I'd say it'll still be around, all the people in Connemara will speak it anyways. There's a lot of people from other cultures too, they're just speaking English all the time. So there's probably a 50-50 average.

Hopes for the survival of the Irish language seem to rest mainly on the influence the media can exert on improving the prestige of the language, on the role played by Irish medium education, and, finally, on the resolve of Irish speakers to speak it to their children as well as on young people using it as their first language:

C3: The future. That depends on the youths, I think. Do they speak it, and will they speak it to their own children I suppose, as you would. I think they would, I think the future is not as bad, it's not as dark as it was. Along with TG4 and radio stations and things like that which are pushing it forward and gradually speaking it and making it just as cool as the English in the end. So I think that with all the political interest in it and the TV station it's improved, it's a bit brighter I mean.

C7: Well, I think it will last. It's just very weak at the moment, but if people try, keep trying to speak their language and speak it to their kids, it will last. We just have to speak it to our kids.

G6: It's hard to tell. I can see there'll probably be a boom. There still is a boom of Gaels coming from outside of the Gaeltacht, I think that a lot of people from outside the Gaeltacht are very interested in that. My parents are both from outside the Gaeltacht and they were very interested. Actually, they spoke Irish [unclear 02:31] they wanted to make sure that we learned Irish and then, but in the Gaeltacht itself I don't know it's hard to tell that, because the old people aren't really speaking it, but then I do think that they would go back to speaking it when they have kids themselves. I don't know why, but... [...] And a lot of people are, I would say, even now you'd know that they'd speak Irish to their kids, where they wouldn't with their peers.

D2: Its future. Well I would like to see a future for the Irish language but I think our government has to have a huge change of mind about all that is best for the Irish language. [...] They always say that schooling is very important they are beginning to have junior schools before four years of age or four years of age, they are beginning to have what is called naíonra Irish spoken for under four-five years of age. And that will be important for those children and hopefully it will follow through into their teenage years and they will have a base in Irish even though they may not do their secondary education in Irish or even some of their national schooling in Irish but they'll have this, it will never leave them. Everything I learned in national school in Irish I have learnt it I remember it still, as you get older you don't retain knowledge as much so to have that in the first few years is very important.

There were also informants who expressed a more pessimistic view by stating that the Irish language will probably disappear in the next few years, unless action is

taken to prevent its demise, like for instance by improving employment opportunities for Irish speakers and the status of the language at an international level²:

C5: I'd say in years and years to come, like in the next forty years it will die completely, because there's not, if there's so much English people coming in to the villages or whatever, they're not going to learn much Irish. They'll learn the basis, but they won't go in depth with it. That's my opinion.

G12: The future. I think the prospects are good if it becomes official in the European Union. If not, if jobs are through Irish I think it has a future, but if not, I can't see why anyone would want to study it if there's no jobs.

These findings echo the results obtained with a national sample in previous studies (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984, 1994) which showed how the majority of the population regards the viability and future role and status of Irish with pessimism. However, it must also be noted that they also recorded a shift towards a more positive stance.

5.5 Governmental support for the Irish language

The question, 'What is your opinion with regard to governmental support for the Irish language in the Gaeltacht', aimed at determining the informants' opinion with regard to governmental policies offered to support the Irish language in the Gaeltacht. In the case of brief answers or whenever an informant answered that s/he did not know much about it I would proceed to probe the issue further by asking the informant to give me an example of the kind of governmental support offered in the Gaeltacht or by asking him/her whether s/he thought something could be changed or improved.

Positive opinions focussed mainly on the expected results of the new language bill as well as on the positive effect of subsidies on the use of Irish:

C3: It's been very slow coming. Only recently, after a long battle, really the ball has just started to roll, you know, it's started to come in. It's just about started.

I: In what ways?

C3: Thanks to the new language bill. All the state services will have to provide in Irish language forms, just forms you know, tax returns and stuff,

² The interviews were carried out before Irish was made an official working language of the European Union on January 1st 2007.

but they have to be through Irish as well, and the person who answers. So it's a good thing, that's a good step, that the language can survive in the official areas of business. So I think that's a good step, it's a positive step.

G6: At the moment it's very, it's very good. I'm on a scholarship, the Gaeltacht scholarship. The Údarás as well, there is a lot of employment, they do set up a lot of internships and stuff like that. There are a lot of subsidies and stuff, and people are always joking about it, from outside of Ireland, you know, saying, "oh, everything is subsidized, you get money, you get a grant for anything up there". Like, that's not exactly true, but the government are trying. But I do think that Irish should be made part of, a language of the European Union. Sometimes it can be hard to get services through Irish. And then you know people that want to do it through Irish or whatever, but if you go in somewhere and say that you want to do something through Irish or whatever, you could be waiting hours just for them to find someone who speaks just a few words of Irish, and that can be very frustrating to try and deal with that.

The excerpts below help illustrate the major concerns expressed by those people who expressed a negative opinion on the support offered to the Irish language by the government:

C2: Negative. I don't know, they don't fund the Irish very well. It's all through English. I know there's talk now about doing things through Irish, but I don't think they're doing much for it.

C5: The support that the government give the Irish language? I suppose that they give some support for it, but I don't think that they give much. Like up in the Dáil now they kind of speak English, and there's one MP that's from Spiddle, who's well known in Spiddle, who's been trying to bring Irish into the EU, in Brussels, and he's trying to bring it through, so he's campaigning for that. But I'd say they don't give much recognition for it. Like Irish is only in the Gaeltacht, around Ireland, like it's strong there, but it's not strong in other places or other countries. But it should get stronger around the country, because if it doesn't it just dies.

I: So what do you think should be done to, do you think anything should be done, or should be changed or...?

C5: *In my opinion, when you're young, that's when you learn the language. If you're in an English school, they should at least have classes in Irish, even start in primary school, and do, like what we used to do is kind of read baby books like in Irish and learn from up enough like then they can have a choice: they can leave it if they want, or keep on doing the Irish. But if they had more Irish classes in school, and talk more Irish even outside the school, to adults and children and teenagers, maybe it would be a big advantage for it.*

C7: *I think it's pretty bad, because if you go anywhere now, any letters sent out to you, the medical card, it's all through English, and I know we don't ask for the Irish form, but they should have it anyways. They should send out English and Irish forms for people. If you ring them up right now it's all English they're speaking, and you can't exactly speak Irish, because they have no Irish, most of them. If you call up to the person for information, it's all through English, because they haven't got the Irish. I think they should have Irish-speaking people as well, like at offices and places like that where the public comes in. They should have Irish and English. They should speak Irish too.*

While both C2 and C5 describe the funding provided by the Irish government in support of the Irish language as insufficient, C5 is also quite critical towards the lack of recognition given by political representatives to Irish as a national language. Moreover, she is also quite assertive in putting forward her idea about the introduction of Irish in English-medium school at all levels. C7 is more specific and describes the unavailability of public services through Irish.

Solutions on how the Irish language can be strengthened and defended from the pervasive influence of English were also offered and they range from granting more autonomy to Gaeltacht regions to increasing the number of political representatives of these areas as well as the number of Irish-medium schools:

I: Do you think the Government should support specific areas or sectors, or whatever?

G2: *Yeah, I think so. The government always paid lip service to what they want, I mean, I think that, what I personally think is that more autonomy should be given to these Gaeltacht areas. Like we have *Údarás na Gaeltachta*, which is a local authority, but that's basically just to give money to people. We should be given more, Irish people should be given more incentives to stay in their areas and to use the language to advance themselves. Some of that is happening but ...*

I: How do you think that should happen?

G2: *Well, I think that like, I think that the electoral system should be re-zoned, so that Gaeltacht areas would have their own representatives in the *Dáil*, the parliament, there's only 5 or 6 areas in the country and between them maybe if they had 3 or 4 representatives, who could then advance our needs. Because we have, like for example, our foreign member of Parliament at home, one of them only comes to the area once a year, like once whenever there's an election he comes and asks us for votes and you never see him again after that. So I think that our representatives should have a louder voice.*

G9: *I think that there should be more Irish schools, more of a chance for an education through Irish, because when we were doing our inter, we had to get our own notes—there's no text books, there's no books with all terminology for business and music, and all that sort of thing. I think there should be more of that, a lot more. It should be better.*

One of the people interviewed provided a creative solution which is based on the idea of creating self-governed regions for Irish speakers:

G2: *Okay, to be very extreme about it, I think, someone suggested this to me before and I thought "well, that's a great idea". If the Gaeltacht, the Irish speaking area, was totally separate from the rest of the country, like a whole, like an interstate in itself with different rules, because, you know, I think it's the only way to preserve the language. I mean, it's extreme, but....[...] Yeah, well kind of self governed, because you can't have people from the outside, again, you know, people who don't know the area, they*

don't know the way of life, and they just set a rule for the whole country and they expect it to suit everyone and it doesn't.

With regard to the situation obtaining in Northern Ireland at the time the interviews were carried out the two informants interviewed in Derry were not very positive:

D1: There's nothing offered here. There is nothing at all offered by the government here at all. Working on that, through the Good Friday agreement, but that is very, very delicate you know. And that will happen. As for the Gaeltacht, you speak Irish, you have grants for your house. You get 265 Euros to a family for their child, be it one, be it five, like it's a set thing for the child. They go through an oral examination every year, and it's money given to them. All these different grants if you speak Irish and if you live in the Gaeltacht. And either scholarships, if I was doing my leaving, my final exam, it's the GCSEs here, like you know, before university, there are certain colleges, like say I needed 7 points, I just got 6, but I was a fluent Irish speaker, and I got an honour in my Irish, that was two points. And you don't pay as much money, and that's just because of being Irish and having the language. Which is good, it's a good incentive. But also there are ones here that might want to go to Dublin, but because they're not from the South, they'd be getting nothing. That's where I'm coming from. And yet the British government, there's no subsidy there for them, you know, there's nothing.

Nonetheless, as D2 points out, the Irish language movement is very active in promoting the language in Northern Ireland at root level:

D2: [The Irish language is] hugely promoted here in Northern Ireland. There are probably 2, 3 or 4 in my class that are teaching Irish involved in that. Their Irish is not as correct as mine but their heart is more in it than mine if you see what I mean and I really applaud them because they may not have the proper pronunciation and that, we've just come from that class now, but at the same time they have huge... I mean most of the people in the class are not native Irish speakers, they're probably from the North of Ireland and they have huge interest in it and I really applaud their heart

and they are actually teaching it from the very start and they have all Irish language schools in Belfast and in Derry and around the country and it's absolutely wonderful, just great, just great to see that.

The answers given to this question about the role played by the Government in supporting the Irish language were indicative of the general negative attitude towards what is being done to preserve the language, but also of the awareness of what Ó Riagáin defined “benign neglect” (1997).

5.6 Difference between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

When asked the question ‘In your opinion is governmental support offered here in the Republic for the Irish language better than that offered in Northern Ireland to Irish speakers’, the great majority of the informants answered that they did not know anything or much about it and thus could not provide any worthwhile information. One of the four people who answered this question highlighted the difference between government support in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in terms of the availability and implementation of general language policies:

G3: *Yes, well, you have to look at it in a view like. Irish, like we have a new language act, the Official Languages Act, which came in last year. We signed the charter, the European Charter for Lesser Used Languages a long time ago and the British government also signed it last year. You can see, I mean, there are a lot of Irish speakers in the north, but they don't get the opportunity to show that, because the language is much more politicized in the north, thus I think throughout history you can see the difference. I mean, British politics with their lesser languages, I mean Welsh, Gaelic and Irish, I mean, it's been a joke. If we wanted to learn to read or write our own language in the English system is zero. They're just basically trying to put out the languages and you can still see that in the North. The British government paying lip service to minority languages. Now in the south, I think the government places more emphasis, but it's still half-hearted to keep the language alive.*

The other three informants were more specific and emphasized the cultural, identity and political issues that, in their opinion, determine and characterize the choice of speaking Irish in Northern Ireland:

C3: *Sure, it is at the moment. Because in the North there's, you see Irish I suppose, some communities see Irish as being their tool, too much in favour of one community it's the other thing. It's getting a lot of attention there. Maybe they see the language as part of that, unless that changes, it might change, the climate there changes with the process, the political process up there. But I think it would be better here.*

G4: *I don't know how it works in the North. Even though I'm from Ulster, I don't know how it works there. [...]. I suppose that in the North, the Irish language is synonymous with an identity, with nationalism, but that's wrong.*

G11: *No. In Northern Ireland it's a culture thing. [...] the language in Northern Ireland is more culturally based.*

These answers show how the respondents from the Republic of Ireland regard Irish as an ideologically and politically charged tool. Preliminary findings from the all-

Ireland survey carried in 2000 (Ó Riagáin, 2007), confirm this attitude which also translates into the language being spoken mostly by Catholics.

5.7 Use of Irish in the community

The aim of the question, 'If you wanted to use Irish in your community would you be able to do so with all the people and in all contexts and situations', was to elicit information about the actual use of Irish in the Gaeltacht community the informants came from or lived in at the time of the interview.

In this case there was no need to further clarify the question or to probe the issue. All informants except one stated that it was possible to use Irish in their community. Among those who answered positively a few were particularly detailed in specifying where, when and with whom it was actually possible to speak Irish all the time:

C7: Yeah, like I said, in my village now it's always Irish, you never hear anyone speaking English. And my nieces and nephews, it's all Irish they have, because they had no English at the start, it's all Irish. You pick up English at school, just like that, it's easy to pick up English at school, when you go into secondary school, like I said, it's all English they'd speak. But Irish is harder to pick up, unless you pick it up from the first day. I'd say if you speak Irish to your kids from the first day, they'll pick up the English pretty easy after that.

Others were more cautious in their answers and observed that while it is currently possible to use Irish in the community this may no longer be so in the near future:

C5: I'd say it would, but, I don't think, as in ten years to come now, that's probably not the point, but in ten years to come I'd say that more English people will come in, less Irish is going to be spoken, that means that it's going to go gradually, it's going gradually already, people are saying it's not, but they're trying their best to keep it alive, but I don't think that's going to happen.

G2 and G6 offered a more detailed description of the places and situations in which the Irish language can or cannot be used with specific reference to public offices:

G2: *Well I suppose you would in theory, but it might mean that, say if you went to the doctor, I suppose they're all supposed to speak Irish, if they're getting a job in The Gaeltacht, you know, somebody along the way has to ask them "can you do your job in Irish?" and they'd say "yes", but if you go in there, chances are, it's like if you go into the bank it's a bit of, like maybe to the old person it's different as well, because you really have to, it's like this whole thing about you know, with young people, if the other person isn't, doesn't want to speak Irish to you, then they'll just turn to English and then it's very hard to turn back, so if I go into the bank, and maybe there is service that will be made in Irish and maybe half of them there can speak it and the others are learning it or whatever. But it's still like, when it comes to official business they'll turn to English, because they know that you speak English so they think you know it's easier for the both of us. And it's uncomfortable, especially when it's someone your own age behind. It depends on the person, some people would just go in there and speak Irish and that's that and they just stick with it and deal with it. But you have to be very strong, very confident to go in there and make someone else uncomfortable. You know, it's a bit of a problem. Basically, there is a service available in, you know, if you go to the doctor's, surgeon, or whatever, like there will be a doctor. They probably all have to speak Irish, but when you're in there, a lot of them would probably turn to English once, when you're in there or whatever. So it's kind of cause they're all more comfortable with it, so no one forces them to speak Irish.*

G6: *You mean like when you're in the shops and all that? Usually yes, sometimes there are people that don't, but most people who work, there's always someone there who's... a huge percent of them would have Irish, although they wouldn't really do much in Irish. In banks and stuff, like it's not, like I said, with the Government, anytime you have to fill in taxes or things like that, it's usually, you have to do it in English. At home, like we all use Irish.*

One of the informants who stated that it is not possible to use Irish in the community remarked that in the Donegal Gaeltacht it would be possible only 30% of the time:

G4: No, it wouldn't be possible. I would use [unclear 06:14] in my hometown [unclear 06:19 – 06:24]. When I go out for the weekends, I would speak [unclear 06:29]. And in the past two years people come to me, 'cause they know that I would speak Irish and they would speak Irish to me first. And they would want to speak Irish, you know even if it's just to practice. You know it doesn't matter to me what language I speak, you know, you can switch over quite easily, and you know it's not about what language you're speaking in, it's about the communication. You know, as long as you're getting your message across and you're both understanding each other, without making an issue out of it, it doesn't matter [unclear 07:00]. So I would use it I'd say maybe 40%... no, that's pushing it, let's say 30% of the time when I'm in Donegal.

The answers given to this question tend to fall into two opposite categories: the overly optimistic and the overly pessimistic. The latter have reported a situation that was confirmed by the results obtained from the questionnaire data, which depict a sombre situation characterized by the growing use of English in community contexts or in those official contexts where the use of Irish should be guaranteed.

5.8 Use of Irish with people from other Gaeltacht areas

This question asked informants to provide information about the use of Irish when communicating with people from other Gaeltacht areas. The rationale behind this question was to verify whether different Irish accents and dialects may interfere with effective communication between speakers from different Gaeltacht areas and may therefore cause a switch to English. The answers given to such questions tended to focus on difficulties in understanding other Irish accents:

C2: I don't normally speak to Donegal people. It's just the accent. We don't really understand it.

However, as most informants remarked, that it is just a matter of getting used to different accents:

C3: I guess I would, yeah, but maybe in terms of the accent, there might be difficulties in understanding the phrasing and certain words. You know, the tendency, in Donegal they tend to speak a little bit quicker. And it would

take a while to get used to it, but you would, you would be able to understand them, yes.

C5: *We probably wouldn't understand each other perfectly the first time, but I'd say after, I'd say probably after a while, talking, you'd get into their conversation, like you get..., we hear the different languages, because when we were in school, we'd have Irish exams, and there's kind of an audio thing, so they'd have everybody, from let's say the Gaeltacht in Donegal or the Gaeltacht in Kerry and Meath, and they'd have different kind of words, so you'd listen into the thing, and they'd be fill-in-answers, and they'd be talking. It was hard at first, because we couldn't understand, cause they'd have different words to us, cause, like sometimes we can't understand them and they can't understand us, so I'd say, if I had a friend from Donegal, which I do, she's hard to understand sometimes, but she says the same thing about me. She can't understand me either!*

G2: *Not really, see I find that my accent changes depending on who I'm talking to, a little bit but not that much, you know. Obviously, if you're talking to a much older person and their Irish is very rich, then you want your own Irish to be rich, so you try not to be putting in any English words or you just kind of make it suit what they're used to. And it's the same thing if you're talking to someone who's learning. You use a lot of English words, maybe just to try to help them understand, or to make yourself more comfortable or whatever. And then if you're talking to somebody from a different part of the country, with a different accent you might again, just kind of neutralize it. Maybe you don't use words that are very local, that they wouldn't understand or whatever. I think it's less of a problem these days because of the television and all that, because I found years ago, well, my family used to travel around the country a lot, so I did not really have a problem, I was used to all different accents, but I found that a lot of people who were native speakers they'd kind of claim that they didn't understand Irish from the North or Irish from Kerry. And I think it's less of a problem now because people are hearing it all the time on the television. I can't say on the radio, because young people don't listen to the Irish radio station because it's very poor.*

One of the informants provided an interesting piece of information when she commented on the difference between the Irish spoken in Gaeltacht areas and the Irish spoken by *Gaeilgeoirí* (second language learners of Irish) in Dublin:

C7: I don't know, because we take gaeilgeoir now and they have Irish, but let's say they're from Dublin or somewhere else, it's very hard to understand them. You would understand them, but it's so different to the Irish in Connemara. But I'd say probably after a while, you'd kind of mix Dublin and Connemara.

These findings are particularly interesting because they confirm a trend that has been described, though scarcely researched, in relation to attitudes towards the traditional vernaculars and the new varieties that are emerging in the urban centres (e.g. Dublin and Belfast). References to this phenomenon tend to describe it as an antagonistic relationship which sees native speakers, who consider 'Dublin' Irish difficult to understand "because of neologisms, archaic words and phrases, and the mixing of dialects" (Heenan, 2005: 39), as C7 observed above, juxtaposed to *Gaeilgeoirí* who maintain the right to consider their own variety (especially Belfast Irish) as a dialect in its own right (Hindley, 1990; Kabel, 2000; Heenan, 2005).

5.9 Use of Irish in the home

Questions on the use of Irish in the home domain focussed mainly on the use of Irish with close family members (parents and siblings) as well as with other relatives.

The answers given to these questions showed that when Irish is the main language of communication in families where both parents are native speakers of the language or made the choice to always use Irish in the home:

G2: Yeah. My family's a bit different from the normal Gaeltacht family, because my parents aren't from the? Gaeltacht. They made the decision to come to the Gaeltacht because they wanted myself and my brother to grow up in it. So we were brought up here, in the Gaeltacht, but they didn't grow up with Irish themselves. So the result is Irish in the house, there's never, there's less English spoken in our house, I'd say, than in any, most other houses in the Gaeltacht, because my parents were making this big effort to

make sure that we were brought up through Irish. So that was kind of different to, you know, for example we'd use an Irish word for something, whereas an English word would be more natural to a Gaeltacht person. Because the Irish word was kind of like made up or kind of a like dictionary word. So when we were small, people used to laugh at us, because we would say the Irish word instead. The most common example is that someone from the Gaeltacht would say "mo bicycle" for "my bicycle", whereas we'd say "mo rothar". And people would say "mo rothar, that's really funny". If you look it up in the dictionary, that's just a bike, but in the Gaeltacht you use the English word, but you kind of change it a bit to suit the language. That's changing as well, because people are using more modern, technical terms, more so because of the television. Like, if you're making a TV programme you don't go throwing in lots of English words. So it's kind of changing a bit, it's more acceptable to have more standardized words.

In those families where one of the parents does not speak Irish the primary language of the home tends to be English especially when the parent who does not speak Irish is the mother:

G7: *Bits and pieces. English is probably the main one, but we do have, you know, like my mum wouldn't have good Irish [unclear 06:48], and she has... you know, if you were talking to her, she'd know what you were saying, so she's not bad, but it's more the English. But, yeah, if we wanted to, we'd all be able to speak Irish.*

G8: *Most. My mother is an English speaker, and my father is an Irish speaker, so there's a lot of English spoken at home. We would switch, sometimes we'd speak English, sometimes we'd speak Irish.*

D2: *Yes, in my own family we just spoke Irish. I'm originally from Donegal, but I got my secondary education in Dublin so I learnt a totally different Irish language from what I was used to so I have had Irish up to 12. After 12 then I had to learn English, I learnt my English in Dublin, I had no English until then and then I had to learn a different Irish as well. Now I can understand 2 Irish so. And now I'm back here and I'm learning a different kind again. But it's good, it's good.*

C5: Yeah. Well, there's my brother's married to an Australian girl, so we'd have to speak English with her, we spoke Irish more and she'd get annoyed, because she can't understand us, so she's always asking, "so what were you saying?", so we kind of do half English, half Irish with people who don't know the Irish.

These and the following excerpts confirm the findings from the questionnaire data and reiterate how Irish language use in the home domain is increasingly a risk due to the influence exerted by the increased influx in the Gaeltacht of non-Irish speaking people.

English was reported as being the language mainly spoken with emigrated relatives:

C5: I have relatives from Australia, and I've got relatives in America, but I don't have a clue. There's one of them who had Irish, but she lost it. But she can understand you sometimes.

C6: Yes, I have some cousins in America.

I: And do they have any Irish?

C6: Oh yeah, they're fluent in Irish.

I: So would you speak in Irish with them?

C6: Oh, yes, anytime we met they spoke to me in Irish.

G10: Yeah, in America and England. but I don't really know. The people in America they came home three years ago, but we spoke English to them when they came home, because she'd been gone... [...]. Her children were, they were children when they came over. She still had Irish, but there was some things, she would try and talk, but there were some things that she would go, "oh, what does that mean again?" so I think she'd forgotten. [...] They came home and spoke English. Like their kids don't have Irish like we do.

G12: Yeah, well, actually, I came from America and learned Irish. That's sort of my focus. So I learnt Irish as well. Everyone would know Irish. And even, in America, the family that I have over there speak Irish as well, so.

D2: I have one aunt who lives in Australia and last year she wrote to me and asked me for an Irish-English dictionary and I sent it to her. She also wanted translations for Irish news, people's names, but when she wrote to me, there are a few different ways of writing Irish, the language itself and she wrote it as she was taught in National School, she's 80 years of age, now over 80, and it was wonderful to see this writing she had in Irish. And I sent her one of the latest Irish-English dictionaries and she wrote back, she writes once a year, and her writing had changed quite a lot. I'm very sorry for her because she probably wasn't able to read properly but it was wonderful to hear her interest in it. I do know an awful lot of Irish would have gone to America while they were there they did speak a lot of Irish and London as well, a lot of people who would have gone to London would have spoken of Irish and even the older generation they go there they don't want somebody else to understand what they're talking about, they must speak Irish, even though it's broken Irish they must understand each other, which is not a nice way of putting it, but at the same time they manage with their broken Irish anyway.

5.10 Irish media

The questions that focussed on Irish media asked the informants whether they watch television programmes in Irish and/or listen to radio programmes in Irish and/or read any printed media (newspapers, books and magazines) in Irish.

Answers to the first question on television programmes in Irish generally elicited positive responses which highlighted two main facts: that there are not enough programmes in Irish broadcast by TG4, the Irish language television channel; and that, with only a few exceptions, the quality of these programme is considered to be good:

C1: I don't think there's enough programmes in Irish, to be honest with you. The channel we have at the moment, TG4, is only about 4 or 5 hours a day of Irish programmes and I don't think that's enough, really. [...] Some of them are quite good, some of them are quite good alright, but a lot of them are very poor, because the language isn't, Connemara people wouldn't be able to understand it, and it wouldn't be up to standard. In that way it's kind of poor, but the majority of them are pretty good.

C3: Some. I wouldn't all the time, but I would listen to some radio programmes in Irish that I'm interested in. I would. [...]

C5: Yeah, well since TG4 came along, I've been watching Ros na Rún and Pop TV, I'd say the news sometimes as well, like if there's a good Irish programme on, I'd watch it. [...] I listen to Raidió na Gaeltachta, and that's it, nothing else.

C7: Yeah, TG4. And it's great for the kids as well, it's very good for the kids. They have cartoons through Irish, and it makes them see that the Irish is cool. [I listen to] Raidió na Gaeltachta all the time. My mum and dad have it on all the time. That's what I'm saying, like when I was young they had it on, so the way it is now I listen to it myself. I think it's all up to the parents to keep the Irish cool.

G2: Yeah, yeah it's good. There's a lot of English programmes on it. But they are making programmes in Irish and that's good. They're quite standard, so.

D2: Yes, I do, I do. One of our lecturers last week showed us a programme about the Irish language in County Tyrone and different things like that. And there is a soap opera as well in Irish as well on Irish stations, TG4, I think it's called like that, it has changed its name so many times, and, but in the media it's not really used that often you know, we have Irish news on Raidió Teilifís Éireann but we don't have that much of it, people don't have the interest in it really as I said, they don't have at the very bottom the basics, you know, have an interest later on either, so kind of one complements the other really. If you learn it in childhood, you can have an interest late on.

Another important aspect that emerged from the answers given to this question is related to the importance of having programmes in Irish targeted specifically at young children:

G3: Yeah, I think that TG4 is very, very, very, very good and like you have sports programmes, you have travel programmes, everything through the medium of Irish. And that's a major advantage as well, cause especially, I think if... like, for example cartoons, you get the Power Rangers and things like that in Irish. [...] So if you get the little children listening to that instead of listening to the English versions of it, it gives you some hope. The fact that you can watch TV from the age of 4 upwards through the medium of Irish is a good advantage.

G8: They have a lot of the popular cartoons translated in Irish. For the kids it's much easier, because when I was small all the programmes were through English and the kids spoke about them through English, but now they have programmes through Irish, and it's better.

With regard to the printed word, most informants either admitted to being used and thus preferring to read newspapers and books in English, or complained about the limited choice available to them in Irish:

C3: Newspapers, not so often in Irish. I'm so used to English versions, the English papers. There's not much choice either in the Irish, in the Irish language newspapers and books, so I wouldn't.

C5: I read Foinse and at school and out here we read in Irish and everything, so. Sometimes, Irish papers at home I'd read bits and pieces. I wouldn't sit down all day and read it, but I would read bits and pieces of it.

C7: Foinse, yeah. I wouldn't read as much through Irish, because there's not that many, and I think there's two in Irish, but I'm not sure.

G2: I don't really read newspapers. I used to buy the Irish paper, Foinse. But I'd just buy it and then I wouldn't read it. I'd just buy it to support it, but then I wasn't reading it. But if it was fair, I'd read it, but I don't read any papers, so. But I'm there aren't really any magazines. You know, it's different, because there isn't a huge market. You want it to be there, but then if you're not willing to buy it then, I don't know. It's difficult really. It's kind of harder to read in Irish than in English. It's terrible to say that, but I

think that everyone's more used to reading in English, there's more material available. So if there isn't a market for it, people aren't going to provide it. I mean, apparently the stuff that is there is great and worth buying.

G3: *Well, we have two newspapers Foinse which is weekly one, and Lá which is the daily one, and they're fairly good, they're good. It's just a problem of circulation with not having as much money as the English do. There's papers like The Irish Times which have Irish articles in them which are usually very good, and the radio station and the TV station are very... the others, again they just pay lip service and run with one or two segments every week. But it's not half as bad now because we have our own channels, so.*

D2: *Books and magazines, newspapers. There are only small articles in the national newspapers. We have a newspaper that comes out perhaps once a week or once a month completely in Irish. But probably they are going to improve this you know the people who are giving out grants for different reasons for speaking Irish, they have a biased type of attitude towards what they're doing. It turns out that a lot of them are earning 80, 90 thousand a year, I mean, and ten thousand are basically spent for travel expenses. So we don't know where the money is going, I applied for a grant at my college here and I can't get it for 5, 6 hundred euros. And they're getting 80 or 90 thousand so, I'll say no more.*

Informants were also asked to provide their opinion with regard to the influence of the media on the standardization of Irish. Most informants commented on the positive impact that the media may have on helping the standardization process in Ireland. Informants provided three main reasons to justify their statement. The first one is that the media, particularly radio and television, expose all speakers to all the different dialects and accents spoken and used in different Gaeltacht areas including the standard variety. Secondly, it encourages the use of Irish among second language learners; and thirdly, it targets the younger audience successfully (MORI, 2004; Ó Laoire, 2007).

5.11 Conclusion

This chapter provided a qualitative analysis of the transcripts of the interviews carried out during the third stage of this study. By being able to articulate in their own words the various responses (and thus without the constraint of scales and multi-choice questions), the informants were able to provide a detailed and specific description of the various dimensions that were the focus of this study. While confirming the questionnaire data, the informants also provided valuable information of aspects that had not been included in questionnaire, such as the attitudes they hold towards speakers of other dialects of Irish, an attitudinal dimension that has been scarcely researched.

Indeed, the content of the interviews and the quality of the answers given by the informants demonstrate the importance of integrating a quantitative methodological approach with qualitative data.

The following chapter will present a summary of the major findings and will provide a more exhaustive discussion of the results obtained by this study and will compare them to previous research.

Chapter 6: Summary and discussion

6.1 Introduction

Chapters 4 and 5 presented the results of, respectively, the analysis of questionnaire and interview data and offered preliminary comments on the findings. This one will provide a summary and a discussion of the main research findings regarding attitudes towards the Irish language and its use in two Gaeltacht areas in the Republic of Ireland and one urban community in Northern Ireland. Moreover, it will also compare the key issues which the research raises with results from previous studies on attitudes and aspects of language endangerment along similar lines. Section 6.2 will present and evaluate the methodology used in the study with its main advantages and limits. Section 6.3 will present a summary and discussion of findings related to various dimensions of linguistic attitudes. Section 6.4 will discuss the principal outcomes in relation to Irish language use in both community and home domains.

Finally, section 6.5 will conclude by outlining the implications of this study's findings for future research in the field of language attitudes and use.

6.2 Methodology

6.2.1 *Study design and samples*

The data analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 were gathered by means of a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews. This mixed-method approach was adopted with the purpose of providing in-depth and nuanced descriptions and comparative analyses of attitudes towards the Irish language in different geo-political settings. It was also intended to assess usage in a variety of community and domestic interactional contexts in the three different locations. Hence, the purpose of this study was to bridge a gap in past and current research by comparing the Irish language situation obtaining in divergent Irish-speaking communities that are characterized by different socio-political contexts.

The secondary aim of the current study was to provide a detailed analysis of the impact of socio-demographic variables on language attitudes, which is an aspect of sociolinguistic research into Irish that was not studied in-depth by the first extensive study carried out in the early 1970s (CILAR, 1975) and that was only partly developed by the *ITÉ* surveys conducted in 1983 and 1993 (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984, 1994). Apart from age, gender and education level – all of which have been examined in

this research context previously, this investigation introduces a fourth variable, namely whether or not the language in which the questionnaire itself is administered can impact upon the attitudes revealed. Thus, respondents taking part in the second stage of the study had the possibility of choosing to complete the questionnaire in either English or Irish. The assumption at the basis of the inclusion of this independent variable was that the choice of the language version would be a reflection of linguistic attitudes.

In the SC and DON Gaeltacht areas, which are characterized by a scattered population, the easiest and most cost-and time-effective way to ensure an appropriate sample size was to target participants via schools and the local *Raidió na Gaeltachta* premises, which then acted as a catalyst for the distribution and collection of the questionnaire. Given the different size and circumstances of the PF community, I distributed the questionnaire personally using a door-to-door and ‘friend-of-a-friend’ approach similar to that advocated in Milroy and Gordon (2003).

6.2.2 The instruments

The aim of the questionnaire was to provide quantitative data, while qualitative material was gathered by using attitude surveys in Ireland and internationally as points of reference for the creation of structured interviews (CILAR, 1975; Dorian, 1981; Ó Riagáin, 1992; MacKinnon, 1991). An English version of the quantitative questionnaire was used in the pilot stage of the study (conducted in the South Connemara Gaeltacht). It was then translated into Irish for the second stage of the study which was undertaken in the Donegal Gaeltacht and in the Shaw’s Road Irish-speaking community in Belfast. The structured interviews took place in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland and formed phase 3 of the investigation.

This questionnaire consisted of 137 items, which were grouped under seven main headings according to the topic addressed, and which included pre-coded questions, 5-point attitudinal scales, multiple choice questions, and a few open-ended questions.

Reliability tests were performed on all the attitude/language use scales and sub-scales. The results show that the reliability scores for the scales that were analyzed with multivariate statistics were acceptable.

The statistical analysis performed on the questionnaire data (factor analysis, ANOVA and MANOVA and) allowed me to obtain a detailed breakdown of the main dimensions of language attitudes, as well as an in-depth description of the main socio-

demographic variables that influence both attitudes and language use, one of the main focuses of the present study.

The questions asked in the course of the semi-structured interviews conducted in Galway and Derry , followed the order of the main headings used in the questionnaire. The only difference between the interview protocol and the questionnaire consisted in the fact that informants were also asked a question aimed at assessing to their own attitudes towards other speakers of Irish, namely speakers of other dialects. The interview data was presented and analyzed by selecting excerpts from the various interviews.

The main limitations of the present study with regard to the methodology employed and the study designed were linked primarily to the issues discussed in Chapter 3.

However, it is certainly worth mentioning that the present study did not investigate the levels of ability and of competence as previous surveys had done. As a consequence, it was not possible to compare this measurement to those obtained in other studies.

6.3 Language attitudes: Discussion of overall results

There are 6,909 known living languages in the world, 473 of which are on the verge of extinction (<http://www.ethnologue.com/web.asp>, accessed 15 September 2011) and it has been estimated that at least half of all these languages will disappear by the end of this century (<http://www.unesco.org>).¹ The influence of attitudes towards different languages and their speakers may determine the survival or the demise of a language. If parents hold negative attitudes towards a language they may stop speaking it to their children and switch to a language which is considered more prestigious as has historically been the case with the Irish language. Conversely, positive attitudes can encourage a community to preserve and revitalize a language. Hence, language attitudes, beliefs and ideologies can determine the future of minority languages.

Since the Republic of Ireland gained independence in 1922, the Irish language has been the object of governmental policies aimed at maintaining its use in Gaeltacht areas and promoting and reviving the language in the rest of the country. Yet despite the

¹ The complete URL for the UNESCO webpage devoted to endangered languages is: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/languages-and-multilingualism/endangered-languages/>

support it has received for the past 90 years, the Irish language is still a language at risk of extinction. In Northern Ireland, on the contrary, after decades of neglect and opposition on the part of the Government, thanks to the voluntary efforts of language activists the language was reintroduced and is now enjoying an unprecedented revival.

One of the main research questions therefore was which language attitudes the Irish speakers of DON and SC hold after so many years of official support as opposed to the attitudes held by the PF sample after many years of neglect. The main hypothesis at the basis of this research question was that the language attitudes of adults living in DON and SC would differ noticeably from those held by the sample selected in PF as a result of the different socio-political statuses enjoyed by Irish in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, alongside the different official support granted to its promotion.

Earlier studies have investigated Irish language attitudes, use and ability in the Republic of Ireland. The CILAR's survey (1975), for example, was the earliest wide ranging sociolinguistic study of a national and a Gaeltacht sample in the modern era. While providing the first extensive sociolinguistic report of the situation of the Irish language, CILAR had some important shortcomings (see §2.5). In the Republic of Ireland, findings from studies on Irish language attitudes indicate how in the past 30 years general attitudes towards the Irish language have remained favourable (with approximately one-third of all the samples reporting a more neutral stance). Direct comparability with findings from these other studies was not always viable for all the attitudinal items included in the current study. It was, nonetheless, possible to draw parallels and to compare findings on a more general level with the three major sociolinguistic national surveys carried out in 1973, 1983 and 1993 (CILAR, 1975; Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1984, 1994). It is also important to note that most of these surveys used national samples as opposed to more localized samples like those targeted in the present study. This means that it was not possible to contrast the differences in attitudes and language use that emerged from the comparison of the results obtained in the three study areas with those from other similar studies. A few notable exceptions are the studies conducted by Ó Riagáin (1992) in the *Corca Dhuibhne* Gaeltacht, by Ó Brádaigh (2009) in Loughrea, a town in County Galway, and, in Northern Ireland, by Malcom (2009).

Unfortunately, the only two studies aimed at comparing Irish language attitudes and use in the Republic and in Northern Ireland are available only as preliminary reports. The first is the *North-South Languages Survey 2000* with a sample of

approximately 2,000 respondents, which was conducted across both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland with the support of *Foras na Gaeilge*. However, the full report has not been published yet (Hickey, 2009), and only some preliminary results are available (Ó Riagáin, 2007). The second, for which only a report based on a preliminary sample of respondents from the Republic is available, is a study on attitudes towards, and use of the languages spoken in Ireland (the whole island) which focuses not only on Irish, but also on attitudes towards English and Ulster Scots (Hickey, 2009).²

The following section will summarize and discuss findings related to attitudes towards Irish in education.

6.3.1 Attitudes towards education

In the Republic of Ireland, education is still regarded as a strategic area for action by the Government in its “aim to ensure that as many citizens as possible are bilingual in both Irish and English” (Government of Ireland, 2010: 11). In Northern Ireland it represents a major instrument in consolidating and expanding Irish-speaking communities and networks (Maguire, 1991).

As detailed in Chapter 1, the provision of Irish-medium education in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has increased consistently over the past 40 years thanks to the former’s policy of establishing Irish-medium schools both inside and outside the Gaeltacht. In the case of Northern Ireland, these schools have also increased in number but in this case the phenomenon is largely due not to state intervention but to the efforts of parents and voluntary organizations.

The respondents’ own experience of Irish as studied in school was assessed by analysing their responses to questions on their satisfaction with regard to the amount of Irish studied at both Primary and Post-Primary school, as well as their level of agreement with attitudinal items (5-point-Likert scales) focussing on various positive and negative aspects of Irish in education.

This block of the questionnaire contained two scales: LESSDOP and MOREDOP (each of the two scales was further divided into two sub-scales which

² Another relevant issue is the tendency of research on Irish language attitudes and use to focus on other more specific aspects and issues of Irish language maintenance and revival efforts, such as: (i) Irish-medium education (e.g. Mac Corraidh, 2008); (ii) Gaeltacht education (e.g. Mac Donnacha *et al.*, 2005); (iii) early immersion programs (e.g. Hickey, 1999); (iv) Irish in primary schools (e.g. Harris *et al.*, 2006); (v) the impact of all Irish-medium schools on home and (vi) the impact of participation in key social networks on the use of Irish (e.g. Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1979).

focussed on specific themes). Those respondents who stated that they would have preferred to study either less or more Irish were asked to express their level of agreement with one of these two scales.

The majority of respondents from the two main samples expressed their satisfaction with the amount of Irish studied in school. The fact that no respondents from PF and only a small minority of the SC and DON samples chose to complete the LESSDOP scale which included nine statements on the disadvantages of studying Irish can in itself be considered an indication of the positive attitudes shared by the three samples towards Irish in education. In addition, the responses given by DON and SC to the items in LESSDOP never showed a marked negative attitude towards Irish in education. On the contrary, with only a slight difference between the two samples, they showed a tendency to take a more neutral stance.

According to the summated scores for the two MOREDOP sub-scales all three samples expressed strong agreement with the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job, and in regarding Irish as a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity.

The analysis of the interview data revealed an equally positive attitude towards Irish in education. When recalling their own experience as students, informants never expressed negative feelings.

CILAR (1975) and Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin (1984, 1994) confirmed that, over a time span of 30 years, attitudes towards Irish in education have not only remained positive but have also become stronger.

The CILAR report also revealed robust support for the teaching of Irish in schools (especially for the provision of Irish-medium education whenever the public requested it), as well as for policies providing good textbooks in Irish, rewards for good Irish teachers and free courses for adults. The national sample, however, also strongly opposed the idea of Government compulsory policies, such as having Irish as a subject in order to pass the Leaving Certificate.

The same level of support was recorded by MacGreil and Rhatigan's (2009) survey which reported a strengthening of positive attitudes towards Irish in education with little changes between the 1988-1989 and the 2007-2008 samples.³

³ The strong support expressed by the PF sample mirrors the findings in Malcom (2009: 209) who reports no opposition to "the provision of opportunities to learn Irish" and to giving this choice in school. It is important to note that Malcom's study was conducted with a sample of young Protestants with little or no exposure to Irish. This implies that positive attitudes towards the language held by (Roman Catholic) Irish speakers

The potential positive or negative repercussions of language attitudes towards Irish in education on actual language use are yet to be fully gauged and this is certainly an area and issue that deserves attention from both the academic and the institutional world.

The interview data from the current study, showed that Gaeltacht schools are not the protected haven one might imagine where children can spend part of their day immersed in an exclusively Irish-speaking environment. Informants often related the fact that the main language spoken in the school yard was English and that the passage from primary to post-primary education often represented the beginning of an inexorable shift towards English, the ‘cooler’ language. Ó Giollagáin *et al.* observed a similar trend and a corresponding drop in Irish language within young peer group networks:

as they progress from primary school to the final years of post-primary: the percentage in the Gaeltacht nationally fell from 17% for those aged 5–8 to 9% for those aged 15–18; and in the case of Category A, the use of Irish in the same age groups fell from 41% to 24%, respectively (2007: 26).

One of the causes of this negative trend could be ascribed to those social and demographic dynamics that tend to disrupt the social and community pattern of Gaeltacht areas, such as the proximity of certain parts of the Gaeltacht to urban areas and the consequent suburbanization of these regions as well as immigration of non-Gaeltacht and non-Irish speakers into the Gaeltacht amongst other factors (Ó Riagáin, 1992; Ó Murchú, 2001; Ó Giollagáin, 2002 and 2005; Mac Donnacha *et al.*, 2005). As a result:

The Gaeltacht education system is not succeeding in transforming those who come to school as English speakers into active Irish speakers. Indeed, data [...] show that it is having the opposite effect: the participation of English speakers in the education system in Gaeltacht schools is reinforcing the use of English among young native speakers of Irish (Ó Giollagáin *et al.*, 2009: 11).⁴

On the basis of the above, one of the conclusions that can be drawn from the current study and from others like it is that the education domain should not remain the main focus of language planning. On the contrary, the attention of policy-makers should shift to other fundamental and pressing issues such as facilitating the socialization of

involved in the ongoing Northern Ireland language movement may be safely assumed to be definitely stronger.

⁴ There is also evidence (Harris, 2006) that children who attend Irish-medium school outside the Gaeltacht outperform Gaeltacht children in some of the language ability tests.

young Irish speakers outside the education system. Given the success and the enthusiasm surrounding the establishment of new urban-based Irish-speaking communities, language policies should also increasingly focus on Irish-speaking communities outside the Gaeltacht that have grown and developed in urban centres and around Irish-medium schools.

6.3.2 *General attitudes towards Irish*

The seven attitudinal statements grouped in this scale focussed on Irish seen as a symbol of identity and on the future of the Irish language.

The link between language and ethnic and national identity is one of the principle tenets of minority languages research, and the link between language and ethnicity “has also been subjected to a good deal of scrutiny and speculation, some of it going back (and still ongoing) across millennia of philosophical and scientific enquiry” (Fishman, 1999: 4), particularly in the last third of the twentieth century. The so-called “ethnic revival” and the “reassertion of the rights and obligations of long-submerged identities” (Williams, 1999: 267) became a salient issue in the promotion and revival of Irish and indeed of other Celtic languages.

Since the CILAR survey was conducted, all similar investigations that followed confirmed the support given to the dimension of attitudes towards Irish as a symbol of ethnic/national identity (Ó Riagáin, 2007; Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009). However, they also revealed that on a national level, support for the language underwent a slight but constant decrease in the decades between 1973 and 1993 (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1994). On a more localized level, moreover, findings from the *Corca Dhuibhne* Gaeltacht (Ó Riagáin, 1992) revealed how levels of agreement with attitudinal statements relating to Irish as a symbol of ethnicity varied within the Gaeltacht with the core of the Gaeltacht reporting the highest values. The all-Ireland survey revealed the manner in which opinions on Government policies differed in the Republic and in Northern Ireland with the former expressing stronger support (Ó Murchú, 2008).

In the current study, the great majority of respondents from all three samples expressed positive attitudes towards the maintenance and survival of Irish as being a key component for their community and national identity.

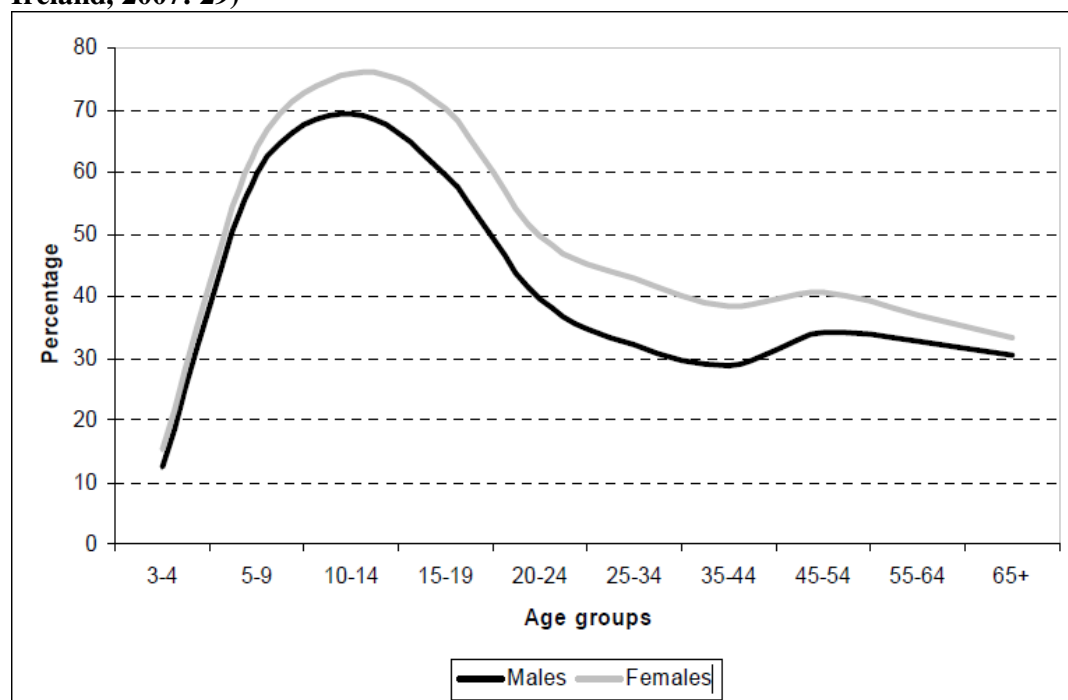
Differences in opinion emerged with regard to the other three items which sought responses related to the present and future situation of Irish. The view that the Irish language is dying and that people are not concerned with its future was strongly

opposed by the PF sample while the majority of the DON and SC samples endorsed it. Likewise, the PF sample expressed the opposing view with regard to how young people see the language with the DON and SC samples expressing more negative opinions.

The factor analysis performed on the SC and DON data sets was aimed at trying to provide a plausible explanation for the stance taken by the two samples. The PCA extracted two factors: the first captured a dimension linked to Irish and identity, which was labelled IRISHNESS; the second described a dimension of attitudes that described a dimension that was more linked to a pessimistic view of the future and situation of the language and was thus named NEGATIVE OUTLOOK.

The main difference between the two samples was represented by the variation of one item which indicates that the language maintenance factor is more important for SC than for DON. The ANOVA performed on this single item on both the SC and the DON datasets with the following variables: gender, age, and education, revealed that the main difference between DON and SC is age-related. While values for DON were non-significant, the post-hoc test revealed three pair-wise differences among the 6 age groups of the SC sample (18-25 vs. 46-55, 36-45 vs. 46-55, and 46-55 vs. over 65). One possible explanation may be that respondents belonging to the 46-55 year old age group may be more committed towards the language.

Figure 6.1: Ability to speak Irish by age group and sex, 2006 (from Government of Ireland, 2007: 29)



This finding also compares well with data from the 2006 Irish Census of Population which recorded an increase in the ability to use Irish in this age cluster (as shown in figure 6.1 above), which could also explain an increased concern for the faith and health of the language.

The MANOVA performed on the two attitudinal dimensions that emerged from the factor analysis on the seven items comprising this scale (IRISHNESS and NEGATIVE OUTLOOK) showed that the following variables influence the attitudes expressed by the SC and the DON samples:

Table 6.1: Influence of socio-demographic variables on general attitudes (MANOVA)

IRISHNESS	SC		DON	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√		√
Education		√	√	
Version	n/a	n/a		√
NEGATIVE OUTLOOK	SC		DON	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√		√
Education	√			√
Version	n/a	n/a		√

The present findings, thus, revealed that age and level of education had some influence on attitudes towards Irish related to ethnic identity only for the DON sample. The SC sample, on the contrary, was influenced only by the level of education.

Due to the small size of the PF sample it was not possible to carry out factor analysis on this data set. However, in an attempt to try to provide a further explanation, the responses given by the PF sample were aggregated according to the dimensions that emerged from the PCA conducted on the SC and DON results. Subsequently, the follow-up analysis (ANOVA), tried to measure the impact of the five socio-demographic variables in order to be then able to compare the results with those computed for the other two samples. This analysis revealed the interesting finding that socio-demographic variables do not appear to have any influence on the attitudes held by the PF sample in this investigation.

The analysis of the interview transcripts provided interesting data on the age variable and its impact on Irish language use. Although the interviews were not specifically aimed at eliciting information on the impact of independent variables on

Irish language attitudes and the use of Irish, many informants talked about how they became more exposed to the English language in their teens. The passage from primary to secondary education represents a watershed in this regard. As children get older, the use of English, particularly in the school context, increases not only outside but also inside the school. These data are relevant for two main reasons. Firstly, because in the Gaeltacht, next to the family, the schools are aimed to be one of the primary agents of socialization through Irish. Secondly, because, given that the distribution of Irish speakers is positively skewed with the higher number of Irish speakers in 5 to 19 age cluster has (CSO, 2007: 32), the increased shift away from Irish by the younger generations may impact significantly on the proportion of Irish speakers in future Gaeltacht generations.

6.3.3 *Attitudes towards Irish language policies*

The GOVLOP scale included thirteen attitudinal items aimed at assessing the impact of Government language policies and the importance they hold for Gaeltacht people thereby encouraging the expression of negative attitudes towards Government policies for the Gaeltacht.

The analysis of the data from the current study suggests that the responses of the three samples are in line with those of other studies (Walsh, 2011).

In terms of the main differences between the three samples, table 6.2 shows the degree of congruence and variance between the opinions of three samples.

The most striking aspect of the results obtained by the current study is represented by the fact that, contrary to what had been hypothesized, the greater level of incongruity was not represented by a dichotomy between the PF sample on the one hand and the SC and DON samples on the other (as occurred for the responses given to GOVLOP 1 and 2), but by the fact that in three instances (GOVLOP 4, 6, and 12) it was SC and DON that were at odds. By comparison, the level of congruity that appears to exist between the Republic's and the Northern Ireland's data sets on all the other attitudinal items is quite surprising. By virtue of their rather different locations and socio-political situations, a more marked difference than that which was in fact revealed by the analysis was expected.

Table 6.2: Agreement and disagreement with GOVLOP

Items	SC	DON	PF
GOVPOL1 <i>The Irish language will survive even without governmental support and subsidies</i>	Disagree	Disagree	Agree
GOVLOP2 <i>The promotion of Irish has been successful</i>	Disagree	Disagree	Agree
GOVLOP3 <i>The Government should give more say to Gaeltacht people in developing the Gaeltacht</i>	Agree	Agree	Agree
GOVLOP4 <i>The money that is spent reviving Irish could be invested in sectors that need it more urgently</i>	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
GOVLOP5 <i>It is right to finance the promotion of the Irish language</i>	Agree	Agree	Agree
GOVLOP6 <i>What the Government does about the Irish language is enough to maintain it</i>	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
GOVLOP7 <i>The political representatives of our community should be fluent Irish speakers</i>	Agree	Agree	Agree
GOVLOP8 <i>Irish speakers have a right to expect that Civil Servants will be able to speak Irish to them</i>	Agree	Agree	Agree
GOVLOP9 <i>The Government should spend more money on improving the teaching of Irish in schools</i>	Agree	Agree	Agree
GOVLOP10 <i>The Government should improve employment for Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht</i>	Agree	Agree	Agree
GOVLOP11 <i>The Irish language policies should concentrate mostly on the Gaeltacht and not elsewhere</i>	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
GOVLOP12 <i>The use of Irish in the Gaeltacht will not increase unless there is a substantial increase in the use of Irish in the rest of Ireland</i>	Agree	Disagree	Agree
GOVLOP13 <i>What the Government does to revive the Irish language is not important to me</i>	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

These results are quite significant because the differences in attitudes and use draw attention to the need for these topics to be analyzed not only from a macro, large-scale perspective but also with a more localized approach. While Ó Riagáin (1992) argues that the two should go hand in hand, Mac Giolla Chríost (2002) disputes that language planning and policies need to be locally based and gauged to the specific needs of each Irish language community. This new approach would be beneficial not only to traditional Gaeltacht areas, but also to the new Irish-speaking communities in

Northern Ireland and in the Republic. Moreover, it entails a similar shift in research from the macro to the micro approach in the study and comparison of attitudes in different old and new Gaeltacht areas. As Ó Riagáin's (1992) study of the *Corca Dhuibhne* Gaeltacht demonstrated, attitudes towards Government policies aimed at maintaining Irish may vary even within single Gaeltacht areas.

The need for more locally-based language planning policies emerged from the interview data too. Many informants interviewed in Galway and Carraroe commented that Gaeltacht areas should be granted more autonomy even to extent of creating self-governed regions for Irish speakers.

Further differences between the SC and the DON samples emerged after performing factor analysis. The PCA carried out on the SC dataset extracted two main factors. The first one, 'Expectations', captured a dimension related to the expectations that respondents have in terms of what the focus of language policies in the Gaeltacht should be and expected linguistic behaviour on behalf of political representatives and civil servants. Being related to attitudinal statements that focussed on the (lack of) success of the promotion and maintenance of the Irish language, as well as to an increased involvement in the development of the Gaeltacht, the second factor was labelled 'Promotion and involvement'.

The PCA performed on the data collected from the DON sample extracted four factors. However, because of low reliability values scored by the other dimensions, only the first factor (and its factor score) 'Expectations and feelings' was retained for further analysis. This dimension described what the respondents expect from the Government in terms of policies and the involvement of political representatives.

The factor analysis performed on this scale for the two samples confirmed how the SC and the DON samples differ in terms of attitudes towards language policies in the Gaeltacht.

The factor analysis undertaken on this scale extracted one dominant dimension for DON (EXPECTATIONS AND FEELINGS) and two for SC (PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT and EXPECTATIONS). The following table summarizes the impact of each single socio-demographic variable on these three dimensions of attitudes towards Government policies:

Table 6.3: Influence of socio-demographic variables on attitudes (ANOVA)

EXPECTATIONS AND FEELINGS (ANOVA)	DON	
	Yes	No
Gender		√
Age		√
Education	√	
Version		√
PROMOTION AND INVOLVEMENT (MANOVA)	SC	
	Yes	No
Gender		√
Age	√	
Education	√	
EXPECTATIONS (MANOVA)	SC	
	Yes	No
Gender		√
Age	√	
Education	√	

Both age and education represent influential factors on attitudes towards governmental policies in the Gaeltacht for the SC sample. Education is the variable that influences the DON sample. Both the post-hoc and non-parametric tests confirmed that the higher the level of education the stronger the endorsement of the attitudinal items grouped into these three sub-scales. These results compare favourably with the findings from MacGréil and Rhatigan's study (2009), which identified level of education, age, and occupation as the variables that are more influential in determining language attitudes and use.

6.3.4 Attitudes towards speakers of other varieties of Irish

This study is the first to my knowledge which investigates attitudes towards speakers of other varieties of Irish. This particular aspect of the research emerged from comments that were hand-written on some of the questionnaires which led to my incorporating this factor as a key item in the interview protocol so as to determine whether or not dialects of Irish were indeed rated more or less positively by participants. The opinions expressed by the informants during the interviews revealed that such attitudes could, in fact, be discerned and that there were particular issues with respect to the Donegal variety. The fact that Irish speakers might indeed hold positive and/or negative attitudes towards (speakers of) the different old and new varieties of Irish might be crucial for future language policy for several reasons. First of all, because it entails that the need to assess and explore whether it is viable for one of these varieties to be promoted as the standard. Secondly, because negative attitudes towards specific

dialects and accents might impact on many language-related domains and issues ranging from, for instance, the impact that the use of these varieties might have in terms of educational and employment opportunities for the speakers of each dialect, to the impact on audience reception of Irish television or radio programmes. As McCloskey remarks:

The concept of Irish is a bizarre and complex construct. It includes the vernaculars of the three main Irish-speaking areas, in all the intricacy of their variations from place to place and from generation to generation; it includes the written standard in all its flexibility, with its neologisms and carefully constructed compromises among the vernaculars; it includes the rich and complex mixes of Irish and English that people in all the Gaeltacht areas experiment and play with; it includes the new urban varieties of Belfast and Dublin, created by something like the pidginization process and probably self-sustaining; it includes the even stranger mixes that are now being created by children in the Irish-medium schools – *Gaelscoileanna* – by the process of creolization (2001: 48).

Yet, despite the detailed account offered by McCloskey a decade ago this is quite a neglected area of research. Given the scarcity of studies on attitudes towards the different vernaculars and /or varieties of Irish it was not possible to compare my findings in this regard with those of other studies focussing on the Irish language. This situation is even more surprising if we take into account the considerable body of research on differential attitudes to dialects belonging to other language families (see for instance Labov, 1966; Lambert, 1967; Edwards, 1977; Romaine, 1980; Boudhard and Giles, 1982; Lippi-Green, 1997; Williams *et al.*, 1999; Alfaraz, 2002). It is surprising that speaker attitudes towards different dialects spoken in old and new Gaeltacht areas have not been the main object of any research although there has been some recent discussion on the use of *Gaeilge líofa lofa* ('fluent rotten Irish') amongst bilingual youngsters in NI on account of the degree of English-Irish code mixing which occurs in their variety (McCoy 2003: 47 and Corrigan, 2010: 129) and on varieties and registers used in Irish language radio and television broadcasting services (Ní Neachtain, 2000).

Thus, while there is a consistent body of research on the grammatical and phonological differences between Irish dialects such as, for instance, Ó Cuív (1951), Ó Siadháil (1989), and more recently, Hickey (2011), reference to the relative status of these varieties regarding their prestige or lack of it is largely anecdotal and speculative.

6.4 Domains of Irish language use in the three study areas

6.4.1 Irish language use in the community

Language use depends on language ability and competence. Most surveys focussing on the Irish language use have also investigated the ability of particular population samples to speak the language. In the 1973-1993 period little or no change in language ability was recorded with the number of respondents claiming native fluency decreasing from 3% in 1973 and 1983 to 2% in 1993 (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1994). By using a different scale and different categories, Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009) reported 47.1 percent of their sample as ‘reasonably fluent’ (112).

In Northern Ireland, the data from the 2001 Census indicate that 10.4% of the population had some knowledge of Irish. The 2000 all-Ireland survey found that 3.2 % of the sample claimed ‘high ability’ in Irish while more than 26% reported ‘partial ability’. This survey also highlighted ethnolinguistic differences in terms of claimed ability with a majority of Catholics and a very small minority of Protestants (92% reported knowing no Irish compared to 43% of Catholics).

This section will summarize and discuss self-reported Irish language use in the community and in the home domains in comparative perspective.

In the community domain two types of interaction were taken into consideration. The first one focussed on the interlocutor involved in the interaction while the second one targeted the place and context where the interaction takes place.

A few interesting features of Irish language use in the three study areas emerged from the analysis of the results (see table 6.4 for a summary of the data). First of all, by applying Ó Riagáin’s (1992) more conservative approach to the definition of levels of Irish language use⁵, it was clear that the most intensive community use of Irish (‘always’) occurs only with the ‘local priest’ and with ‘teachers’ in both SC and DON. The percentages reporting moderate use (‘often’) of Irish are generally higher (as high as 50-60% for some categories of interlocutors). These results are very consistent with Ó Riagáin’s study of *Corca Dhuibhne*, but are in stark contrast with MacGréil and Rhatigan’s (2009) investigation which reports much higher levels of Irish use in the community.

⁵ Levels of use for ‘Interlocutors’ have been combined as follows: ‘High’ comprises ‘only Irish’, ‘Moderate’ comprises ‘Mostly Irish’ and ‘Irish and English equally’, ‘Low’ comprises ‘Mostly English’ and ‘Only English’. Levels of use for ‘Places’ have been combined as follows: ‘High’ comprises ‘Always’, ‘Moderate’ comprises ‘Often’, ‘Low’ comprises ‘occasionally’, ‘seldom’ and ‘never’.

As expected, the PF sample reported the lowest levels of Irish language use with the higher percentages falling into the ‘low’ level for all categories except for ‘visiting students’. Quite unexpectedly, the reported use of Irish with ‘teachers’ is predominantly ‘moderate’.

Table 6.4: Summary of levels of Irish use in the community

Interlocutor	Study area			Level of use	Place	Study area		
	SC	DON	PF			SC	DON	PF
<i>Shopkeepers</i>	39%	21%	0%	High	<i>In church</i>	80%	77%	38%
	51%	68%	19%	Moderate		15%	16%	31%
	10%	11%	81%	Low		5%	7%	31%
<i>Veterinarians</i>	8%	5%	0%	High	<i>At work</i>	77%	53%	36%
	31%	41%	0%	Moderate		13%	34%	21%
	61%	54%	100%	Low		10%	13%	43%
<i>Doctors</i>	14%	11%	19%	High	<i>In public meetings</i>	57%	33%	7%
	56%	37%	19%	Moderate		31%	42%	33%
	30%	52%	62%	Low		12%	25%	60%
<i>Local Gardaí</i>	33%	14%	n/a	High	<i>In the local Garda station</i>	50%	18%	n/a
	57%	46%	n/a	Moderate		30%	20%	n/a
	10%	40%	n/a	Low		20%	62%	n/a
<i>Public Health nurses</i>	28%	9%	0%	High	<i>At the doctors’</i>	30%	15%	23%
	53%	30%	13%	Moderate		41%	22%	12%
	19%	61%	87%	Low		29%	63%	65%
<i>Local priest</i>	70%	64%	19%	High	<i>In public offices</i>	12%	17%	0%
	25%	31%	25%	Moderate		30%	22%	6%
	5%	5%	56%	Low		58%	61%	94%
<i>Visiting students</i>	36%	35%	57%	High	<i>At the petrol station</i>	64%	42%	0%
	57%	56%	29%	Moderate		19%	31%	0%
	7%	9%	14%	Low		17%	27%	100%
<i>Tourists</i>	5%	5%	0%	High	<i>At the post office</i>	66%	58%	0%
	22%	32%	7%	Moderate		21%	20%	0%
	73%	63%	73%	Low		12%	22%	100%
<i>Social welfare officers</i>	29%	12%	0%	High	<i>When visiting friends</i>	49%	36%	24%
	24%	31%	6%	Moderate		33%	13%	41%
	47%	57%	94%	Low		18%	11%	35%
<i>Bus conductor</i>	33%	37%	0%	High	<i>In pubs</i>	50%	32%	12%
	33%	19%	14%	Moderate		35%	43%	29%
	34%	27%	86%	Low		15%	25%	59%
<i>Teachers</i>	70%	69%	37%	High				
	28%	26%	44%	Moderate				
	2%	5%	19%	Low				
<i>Civil servants</i>	10%	16%	0%	High				
	40%	42%	13%	Moderate				
	50%	42%	87%	Low				

As table 6.4 illustrates, the percentages of reported use in different places are strikingly higher for all three samples (although the PF sample does not claim ‘high’ use of Irish in any of the places listed).

The fact that there is a difference in reported use between the interlocutor- and the place- oriented interactions is an interesting result. The same trend was identified in findings related to the GENUSE scale, which focussed on Irish language use in specific contexts. In this instance too, self-reported use of Irish was much higher than the interlocutor-oriented interactions, particularly in those contexts which represented a more intimate and personal setting.

These results certainly corroborate what was hypothesized in terms of the determinants of language choice for both the *Corca Dhuibhne*, the national samples of the 1973 and 1983 *ITÉ* surveys, and MacGréil and Rhatigan’s (2009) study. Their findings indicate that, as a general rule, Irish speakers are reluctant to initiate conversations in Irish if they are not knowledgeable either about their interlocutors competence in the language or their attitudes towards its use. Hence, one possible explanation for the difference between reported use of Irish in interlocutor- and the place- oriented interactions could be that it is not so much the domain context that influences language choice (and, subsequently the use of English instead of Irish), but who the interlocutor is.

The data from the interviews showed that the sample was quite divided on the issue of Irish language use in the community. While the overly optimistic stated that it is possible to use Irish in a great variety of places, contexts and situations, the overly pessimistic reported that that is possible only 30% of the time. In general, however, both categories believe that the use of Irish in Gaeltacht communities will decrease consistently in the future.

The factor analysis performed on the three scales isolated the following issues:⁶

1. from DOMPEOPLE two main factors which describe the data in terms of formal or informal role-relationships;
2. from DOMPLACE two dimensions related to formal and informal settings;

The multivariate analysis carried out on these two attitudinal dimensions identified ‘age’, ‘education’ and ‘version’ as the variables that most influence the language used to communicate within these two categories of role relationships.

⁶ GENUSE was retained as a single factor and analysed by means of ANOVA.

Table 6.5: Influence of socio-demographic variables on community language use ((M)ANOVA)

Formal	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√		√
Education		√		√
Version	√		n/a	n/a
Informal	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√		√
Education		√		√
Version	√		n/a	n/a
Formal settings	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√		√
Education		√	√	
Version	√		n/a	n/a
Informal settings	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√		√
Education		√	√	
Version		√	n/a	n/a
Genuse (ANOVA)	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age	√		√	
Education	√		√	
Version		√	n/a	n/a

In the case of Formal and Informal, the only variable that has some impact on language use (in DON) is the language version of the questionnaire. Therefore, choosing to complete the questionnaire in either the English or the Irish version constitutes an attitudinal statement in itself.

In SC, the use of Irish in Formal and Informal settings is influenced only by the level of education. Therefore, the higher the level of education the higher the level of use of Irish in these contexts. In DON, the choice of completing the questionnaire in Irish is indeed indicative of a higher use of Irish in the contexts pertaining to Formal settings.

The ANOVA performed on the third scale revealed that age and education influence SC and DON language use in most of the contexts included in this scale.

6.4.2 *Irish language use in the home*

In many situations of minority language use, the home domain represents the last defence against the influence of the majority language. As Fishman states:

In many studies of multilingual behavior the family domain has proved to be a very crucial one. Multilingualism often begins in the family and depends upon it for encouragement if not for protection. In other cases, multilingualism withdraws into the family domain after it has been displaced from other domains in which it was previously encountered (1965: 76).

He then goes on to specify that it is possible to follow two different approaches with regard to the differentiation of speakers within the family: a research may specify family “members”: father, mother, child, etc.; or, alternatively, *dyads* within the family: grandfather to grandmother [or vice versa], grandmother to father, etc. The research on which this work is based relies on the second approach, because it recognizes:

that interacting members of a family (as well as the participants in most other domains of language behavior) are *hearers* as well as *speakers* (...), but it also recognizes that their language behavior may be more than merely a matter of individual preference or facility but also a matter of *role-relations* (Fishman 1965: 76).

Irish language use in the family is a particularly important feature of language maintenance in Ireland, where Irish-speaking households remain the last and only source of production of new native Irish speakers. Moreover, by taking into consideration different generations of the same family it is also possible to measure intergenerational transmission of Irish in the manner of Li Wei (1994) *inter alia*. Moreover, by comparing levels of Irish usage in the respondents’ childhood home and their current one, it is possible to analyse both whether this transmission has been successful and to what extent parents are prepared to raise their children through Irish.

Prevalence of the language among children is another strong indicator of a successful transmission from one generation to the next. Furthermore, Irish usage by younger speakers means that there is the possibility and hope of maintaining the Irish language at the current level of use in different domains for at least another generation.

In Gaeltacht communities, home use of Irish has been decreasing consistently (Harris *et al.*, 2006). This reduced exposure to the Irish language within the family is due to a number of causes among which the most notable are the lower number of endogamous marriages between fluent Irish speakers in Gaeltacht areas (Ó Riagáin,

2001), and increased immigration of people who are not Irish speakers into these regions (Ó Riagáin, 1997).

The data from the present study compared the family of origin of the respondents with the current family and show both an interesting trend of intergenerational transmission as well as highlighting differences in the home use of Irish in the three study areas. As the percentages in table 6.6 show, the area with the highest levels of use was SC, followed by DON and PF. The findings from the PF sample are consistent with the history of the Shaw's Road community, which was established by second language learners and thus reflects the fact that Irish language use in the family of origin is much lower than what takes place in the current family.

Table 6.6: Summary of levels of Irish use in the home domain⁷

Used home	Study area			Level of use	Study area			Now home
	SC	DON	PF		SC	DON	PF	
<i>Mother and father</i>	70%	54%	12%	High	72%	64%	59%	<i>Self with spouse</i>
	10%	15%	25%	Moderate	14%	19%	23%	
	20%	31%	63%	Low	14%	17%	18%	
<i>Mother and children</i>	69%	49%	13%	High	76%	44%	57%	<i>Mother and children</i>
	12%	21%	14%	Moderate	14%	24%	7%	
	19%	30%	73%	Low	10%	32%	36%	
<i>Father and children</i>	69%	63%	20%	High	74%	49%	71%	<i>Father and children</i>
	13%	17%	27%	Moderate	21%	30%	15%	
	18%	20%	53%	Low	5%	21%	14%	
<i>Children with each other</i>	56%	45%	13%	High	60%	53%	57%	<i>Children with each other</i>
	24%	24%	13%	Moderate	28%	24%	14%	
	20%	31%	73%	Low	12%	23%	29%	
<i>Parents with relatives</i>	62%	54%	0%	High	72%	38%	22%	<i>Grandparents with children</i>
	23%	24%	21%	Moderate	19%	35%	14%	
	15%	22%	79%	Low	9%	27%	64%	
<i>Parents with friends</i>	62%	43%	0%	High	33%	51%	8%	<i>Children with friends</i>
	23%	36%	27%	Moderate	41%	28%	77%	
	15%	21%	73%	Low	26%	21%	15%	
<i>Grandparents with grandchildren</i>	78%	62%	15%	High				
	12%	15%	8%	Moderate				
	10%	23%	77%	Low				
<i>Grandparents with parents</i>	75%	63%	23%	High				
	13%	20%	0%	Moderate				
	12%	17%	77%	Low				

A comparison between the SC and the DON samples, moreover, shows that while levels of use in the SC home domain have increased (with higher reported use of

⁷ Levels of use for 'Places' have been combined as follows: 'High' comprises 'Always', 'Moderate' comprises 'Often', 'Low' comprises 'occasionally', 'seldom' and 'never'.

the language in the current family), the use in specific role-relationships in the DON home domain has experienced the opposite trend (e.g. Irish language use between mother/father and children and parents with relatives).

Another interesting result is that findings from the DON and the SC samples indicate that the pattern of transmission that existed in the family of origin was replicated in the current family. Thus, the fact that the use of Irish was higher between fathers and children in the families of origin of the DON sample is mirrored by the results obtained for the current family situation.

The MANOVA performed after assessing the one-dimensionality of both scales revealed that Irish language use in the family of origin in SC and DON is influenced by the following variables:

Table 6.7: Influence of socio-demographic variables on language use in the home (MANOVA)

USEDHOME	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√	√	
Education		√	√	
Version	√		n/a	n/a
NOWHOME	DON		SC	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gender		√		√
Age		√	√	
Education	√			√
Version	√		n/a	n/a

The findings suggest that in the SC study area age influenced both Irish language use in the family of origin and in the current family, while education was influential in determining language use in the family of origin. In DON, the choice to complete the questionnaire in Irish was indicative of higher levels of use of the language both in the family of origin and in the current family and it is also influenced by level of education. As already noted above, the impact of education is consistent with findings reported in other studies (such as MacGréil and Rhatigan, 2009).

The interview data provided a more nuanced description of the factors that may be involved in choosing between Irish and English in the family domain. One of the most relevant elements at the basis of English-language use in the family seems to be related to having a parent who does not speak Irish. The negative influence of mixed-language marriage is emphasized by Ó Riagáin (1992) and Ó Giollagáin *et al.* (2007).

The latter, in particular, stress how the increasing number of young English-speaking Gaeltacht-based parents who enrol their children in the local schools “is reinforcing the use of English among young native speakers of Irish” (Ó Giollagáin *et al.*, 2007: 15).

6.4.3 Irish language media

The analysis of the data gathered by this study revealed that a large majority of the respondents in all three study areas watch and listen to Irish language programmes and that many of them also read in Irish.

According to the answers given to the questions contained in the block of the questionnaire devoted to the use of Irish in the media, there are a number of factors that determine the choice to watch/listen to programmes in Irish and to read in it. They vary according to the study areas, but, generally speaking, priority is given to the fact that the respondents can identify better with programmes in Irish, that they prefer their quality and that they find them more entertaining.

Moreover, the two attitudinal statements on the influence of the media on language maintenance and on young people’s attitudes towards their Gaeltacht community revealed a strong belief on behalf of all the samples that the media have a fundamental and strategic role to play in terms of language maintenance and within language planning policies. As the content of the interviews revealed, the presence of both the dialectal and the standard varieties in all media types may contribute to expose viewers, listeners and readers (i.e. Irish language speakers of all levels of competence) to all the existing varieties of Irish and could, hypothetically, help audiences familiarize with different Irish dialects and accents. The main application of this finding is that it should lead to the raising of awareness that it is important to choose the language variety that is best suited to satisfy the needs of all audiences.

One important point that emerges from the scant literature on this subject is that there is a pressing need for studies aimed at defining the needs of the target audiences, in terms of the variety to be used and the type of screen translation to employ whenever foreign or English-language programmes are aired, as well as the need to see a well-defined language policy implemented in the (Irish language) broadcasting sector. Perhaps the most sensible conclusion that can be drawn regarding this issue is that expressed by Ó Connell when she observed:

In the absence of a formal, state-funded language planning policy, it is of the utmost importance that this point be appreciated and reflected in the linguistic policy adopted by minority language broadcasters so that programme commissioners and makers, as well as parents, teachers,

terminologists and others involved informally in aspects of language planning, can all make a useful, strategic contribution to the maintenance and development of the minority language in question (2000: 173).

6.5. Conclusion

This chapter provided a summary and discussion of the main findings of the current study. The findings show how, in line with previous studies, attitudes towards Irish tend to be positive when they are linked to ethnic identity. The analysis of attitudes towards government policies in the Gaeltacht indicates that the three samples differ in their opinions with regard to what is being done to maintain the language. This discrepancy in the opinions held by the three samples is even more striking because the strongest dichotomy does not obtain between the two samples from the Republic and the sample from Northern Ireland, but between the two Republic samples.

Results related to Irish language use indicate that the use of Irish in the community is not very high, especially when it is interlocutor-based, while it tends to be higher when it is reported as the language of interaction in different places and contexts. Moreover, findings also show that the home domain is still the backbone of language survival. However, as the results show, level of use vary depending on the study areas with SC reporting much higher use than the other two areas. Intergenerational transmission seems to be influenced by the pattern of language use in the family of origin.

Due to the scarcity of studies that have a more localized approach to sampling and data collection, it was not possible to provide a more varied comparison with similar research. Moreover, some of the findings from this study (e.g. attitudes towards the media and towards speakers of other Irish dialects) demonstrate that there are areas linked to the study of Irish language attitudes and usage and, above all, to the impact that they may have on the maintenance and revitalization of Irish, that would certainly benefit from further research

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

By combining both a qualitative and quantitative methodological approach, this study aimed at providing a nuanced description and comparative analysis of attitudes towards the Irish language and its use in three distinct regions, representing two different geo-political settings.

The main focus of sociolinguistic research in Ireland has been on a variety of issues related to Irish language policies, focussing, among others, on Irish in education (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin, 1979; Hickey, 1999; Mac Donnacha *et al.*, 2005; Harris *et al.*, 2006; Mac Corraidh, 2008), Irish in the media (Ó Connell, 2000, 2004; Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000; Ó Laoire, 2000), or the linguistics of the Irish language (Ó Cuív, 1951; Wagner, 1958-64; Ó Siadháil, 1989; Ó Dochartaigh, 1987; Hickey, 2011). A very interesting finding of this project which adds considerably to the body of research already in existence is the outcome of my comparison between questionnaire responses distributed in the three study areas. The results indicate that the key differences in opinion were actually recorded between the two data-sets generated in the Republic of Ireland. This finding is particularly interesting because, with very few exceptions (like Ó Raigáin, 1992), Irish language studies in the past have predominantly focused on national or regional samples (CILAR, 1975; Ó Raigáin and Ó Gliasáin 1984 and 1994; Sweeney, 1987; Ó Riagáin, 2007; Hickey, 2009; Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009), but have never collected or compared data from different old and/or new Gaeltacht areas. Therefore, an important objective of this study was to bridge this gap in research by comparing the Irish language situation obtaining in divergent Irish-speaking communities that are characterized by different socio-political contexts and by differing distributions of speakers.

This chapter will review the study's limitations, and major findings and will also indicate possible orientations for future research.

7.2 Limitations of the present study

The current study aimed at providing an in-depth representation of the attitudes of Irish speakers towards Irish and a useful preliminary exploration of attitudes towards different varieties and accents of Irish. However, there are undeniably some limitations, which, if corrected, would certainly yield more representative data.

First of all, the samples of the current study were selected by using cluster sampling, a technique that cannot guarantee the representativeness of the sample with regard to the population it is selected from. Moreover, the number of informants who agreed to be interviewed was quite small and was selected mainly among university students, thus, making it relatively homogeneous in terms of age, gender, as well as social and educational status. These factors may have biased the responses to the questionnaire and during the interviews. It would therefore be useful to repeat this study by using individuals representing a wider range of demographic characteristics. Likewise, given the differences that characterize the attitudes assessed in the three study areas, it would also be interesting to extend the study to other traditional and new Gaeltacht areas.

Another aspect of the research that could be improved upon relates to the data elicitation method. The data for this study were collected by means of a direct method of data elicitation (e.g. questionnaires and interviews, see § 2.2). For future research it would be interesting to combine the exploration of overt (conscious) attitudes with that of covert (latent) attitudes, that is those attitudes that usually represent hidden prejudices towards a certain language or dialect (Garrett, 2010). By using indirect tasks like the matched guise technique, for instance, it would be possible to investigate and measure attitudes towards the different traditional vernaculars and the new emerging varieties of Irish. Doing so, may improve our knowledge of the extent to which negative attitudes towards particular varieties and accents of Irish represent, on the one hand, an obstacle to communication and, on the other, can be viewed as portents for the survival and revival of the language - particularly outside the Gaeltacht.

Thirdly, even though great attention was paid to the impact of age, gender, educational level and language version of the questionnaire on the respondents' attitudes and their self-reported use of Irish, it may be worth including other variables that, according to other studies (e.g. Ó Raigáin, 1992; Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009) might also be influential in determining not only attitudes, but also language use, like place of birth, marital status and Irish language ability/competence. By analysing the influence of these latter variables on Irish language use, it might be possible, for example, to assess the exact impact that they have on actual use especially among specific age cohorts.

7.3 Major findings and implications for future research

7.3.1 Attitudes towards the Irish language

The analysis of both the questionnaire and the interview data confirmed some of the results obtained by previous research, but also revealed a few striking differences.

The results associated with the various dimensions of attitudes towards the Irish language explored showed how the general support towards the language in education and specific Irish language policies as reported in similar research was confirmed by the data from this study. The great majority of respondents from all three samples expressed positive attitudes towards the maintenance and survival of Irish as being a key component for their community and national identity. Interestingly, differences in opinion emerged with regard to the present and future situation of Irish with positive endorsement expressed only by the PF sample. Moreover, the factor analysis performed on the SC and DON data-sets revealed interesting variability concerning the item: *The maintenance of Irish is the most important of all matters for my community*. This difference in opinion is held in particular by respondents from the SC sample who belong to the 46-55 age cluster and it is very likely to be linked to the recent history of this Gaeltacht region which has a strong political tradition of supporting of the Irish language (Akutagawa, 1987).

Another important finding relates to attitudes towards Governmental support and language policies, which revealed that, contrary to what had been initially hypothesized, i.e. that the PF sample would differ significantly from the two samples from the Republic of Ireland, SC and DON are at variance with one another too. Alongside Ó Riagáin's (1992) study of the *Corca Dhuibhne* Gaeltacht and Mac Giolla Chríost's (2002, 2006) call for community-based language policies which are gauged to the specific needs of each Irish language community, these results are particularly relevant for future research because they draw attention to the requirement that studies of Irish language attitudes must take a more localized approach if they are to get to the heart of differences in attitudinal dispositions across regional space. Despite the limitations described in §7.2, I would argue that this is a key outcome of the research and, by implication, that this is a more favourable orientation than traditional frameworks based on the top-to-bottom and universal frameworks put forward by Fishman (1991, 2001) and others (e.g. Crystal, 2000; UNESCO, 2003). Moreover, it also showed how the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, by means of a mixed-method methodology, can be useful in uncovering dimensions of attitudes at the community level that a single-method approach would probably neglect.

A further important result concerns attitudes towards speakers of other varieties of Irish. Informants were quite outspoken about the difficulties that some of them experience when they try to communicate with speakers from other Gaeltacht areas. These findings are even more interesting given the surprising scarcity of studies focussing on this dimension of Irish language attitudes. As already mentioned in the section above, future research should also focus on attitudes towards speakers of the new varieties of Irish that are emerging outside traditional Gaeltacht areas like the new urban Irish-speaking communities of both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland (McCloskey, 2001; McCoy, 2003; Corrigan, 2010) and the impact these mixed varieties may have on the survival, maintenance and revival of Irish. Another interesting and under researched issue that would certainly benefit from further study is the extent to which attitudes that listeners and viewers hold towards dialects and accents used by radio speakers and television presenters impact upon questions of vitality (Ní Neachtain, 2000).

7.3.2 Irish language use

My findings also indicated that levels of Irish language use in the community are moderately low as most surveys conducted both on a national and an international level have already reported. Home use of Irish is not as high as initially expected. These findings are quite worrying because they demonstrate that the home domain, the stronghold of Irish language transmission and use, may be at risk of a further shift towards English.

Again significant differences were found between the three samples which reported varying levels of Irish language use with the dyads included in the scales. Higher levels of use are reported by the SC sample as compared to the other two regions. In particular, the levels of reciprocal use between parents and children as reported by the DON sample are below 50% in the current family as opposed to the use reported for the family of origin. Therefore, the pattern of intergenerational transmission to future generations in the DON study area may be threatened by a further shift to English. These results mirror the negative trend reported by Ó Giollagáin *et al.* (2007) who redefined the boundaries of Gaeltacht areas (see Figure 1.5 in Chapter 1) and drastically reduced the areas where the language is spoken on a daily basis by more than 67% of the population, thus highlighting the increasingly fragmented nature of these Irish-speaking communities. These low percentages of Irish language use in the family domain may be determined by the fact that one of the parents does not speak Irish or is

not fluent enough to feel comfortable speaking the language with his/her children. As already discussed in §6.4.2, the issue of endogamous marriages on Irish language use in the Gaeltacht has been listed as one of the main causes of language shift by many studies in the past three decades (Akutagawa, 1986; Ó Riagáin, 1992; Ó Giollagáin et al, 2007 *inter alia*). Yet, the negative impact of this issue and of the increased influx of immigrants with no competence in the language settling in Gaeltacht areas seems to be a matter not usually addressed by language policies.¹

Finally, results also indicate that the level of usage of Irish language programming and printed media is quite high and that the three samples hold positive attitudes towards Irish language media. These findings not only confirm those from other studies (Ó Laoire, 2007; Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009) but are also indicative of a fundamental area that Governments should not ignore for the positive impact it may have on young minority language speakers (MORI, 2004). The analysis of the interviews confirmed the successful impact of TG4 and its Irish language programming and how the informants (most of whom are in the 18-25 age group) regard it as a positive influence for the role it has played in granting higher prestige to the language.

The success of small-scale initiatives that have led to the creation of thriving Irish-speaking communities outside the Gaeltacht is another indication that the future, the survival and the revival of the Irish language may be dependent on a different approach to how language policies are designed and implemented. Following the example of *Pobal Feirste* in Belfast or of the Irish-language communities that grew out of families settling near monolingual Irish-speaking schools outside the Gaeltacht, a more localized approach to the study of Irish language communities may help reveal all the fundamental factors that make community-based initiatives successful and thus help create a model based on the positive experience of truly committed and motivated Irish speakers who have managed to create Irish-speaking communities outside the protected haven of the Gaeltacht (Mac Giolla Chríost, 2006).

Future efforts on behalf of language planners, voluntary associations, and researchers alike should therefore take into consideration not only the different dynamics that may be at work among and within communities, at inter- and intra-group level alike, but should also focus their attention on those areas of Irish language research, like attitudes towards Irish language media and Irish dialects, that, to date,

¹ One notable exception is the one described by Mac Giolla Chríost (2006) who mentions the language impact statement conducted by the Galway County Council on developments in the area of the Gaeltacht in its County Development Plan 1997–2002.

have not received enough attention but which may prove to be particularly insightful in understanding dimensions of attitudes towards the Irish language,

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http://www.baal.org.uk/public_docs.html: website of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, a professional association based in the UK, which provides a forum for people interested in language and applied linguistics. The website provides a section from which it is possible to download documents such as the Recommendations on Good Practice in Applied Linguistics.

<http://www.ethnologue.com/web.asp>: a website providing an encyclopaedic reference work cataloguing all of the world's 6,909 known living languages.

http://www9.euskadi.net/europa_hizk/ing926.htm: this section of <http://www9.euskadi.net/euskara/ing90.htm> is devoted to comparing a range of language use surveys conducted within minority language groups in order to develop a clear conception of their role and their significance for the language planning process at both the regional/national and European levels.

http://www.mercator-research.eu/fileadmin/mercator/dossiers_pdf/irish_in_ireland.pdf :

The Mercator European Service Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning (Mercator Research Centre in short) aims at the acquisition, circulation and application of knowledge. The Mercator Research Centre gathers and mobilises expertise in the field of language learning at school, at home and through cultural participation in favour of linguistic diversity of Europe. The Mercator Research Centre is an independent and recognised reference centre for policy makers and professional workers in the field of multilingual education and language learning. Regional dossiers aim at providing concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union.

<http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie>: this is the website of GAELSCOILEANNA TEO. is a national, voluntary organisation supporting the development of Irish-medium schools at primary and at post-primary level was founded in 1973. The organisation offers advice, encouragement and practical support to the public, or to members of the public wishing to set up schools and operates according to public demand.

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<http://www.panunet.net/ulster-standard.html>): this is an article on the Ulster standard variety of Irish.

<http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller4/MacDonnacha.html>: this is the website from which I retrieved the presentation by Joe Mac Donnacha 'Power differentials in language planning' presented at the World Congress on Language Policies, Barcelona, 16-20 April 2002.

<http://www.nui.ie/college/entry-requirements.asp>: web page of the National University of Ireland from which information regarding the Matriculation Requirements of the University was retrieved.

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<http://www.ahg.gov.ie/en/Irish/OfficialLanguagesAct2003/Legislation/>): web page of

the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht from which information regarding the Official Languages Act 2003 was retrieved.

<http://www.unesco.org>: website of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Appendix A. Letter of endorsement by Údarás na Gaeltachta

10ú Nollaig 1998



Údarás na Gaeltachta

Na Forbacha, Gaillimh. Teil: (+353 91) 503100 Facs: (+353 91) 503101
ríomhphost: eolas@udaras.ie <http://www.udaras.ie>

Don té lena bhaineann

Rachele Antonini, Ollscoil Bologna, An Iodáil

Deimhnímhse go bhfuil taighde ar dhearcadh an phobail i leith na Gaeilge i gceantar Chonamara á dhéanamh ag Rachele Antonini agus go bhfuil comhoibriú agus tacaíocht ina leith seo á gcur ar fáil againn di. Ba mhór agam é dá bhféadfá pé cabhair is féidir a thabhairt di leis an tasc taighde seo a chur i gcríoch má iarrann sí sin ort.

Rachele Antonini, University of Bologna, Italy

The above-mentioned is currently carrying out a research assignment relating to peoples' attitudes to the Irish language in the Conamara Gaeltacht. We are facilitating her in this assignment as we have a particular interest in the findings. We would appreciate it if you would assist her in any way possible if she so requests you.

Le dea-mhéin,

Pádraig Ó hAoláin

Ceannaire Eolais

OIFICÍ RÉIGIÚNACHA

Na Doirí Beaga,
Co. Dhún na nGall

An Daingean,
Co. Chiarraí

Béal an Mhuirthead,
Co. Mhaigh Eo

35 Bóthar Siolbhroin,
BÁC 4

Baile Mhic Íre,
Co. Chorcaí

Appendix B. Questionnaire in English

I would like to thank you very much for your patience and cooperation. I want to assure that all the information gathered from the questionnaire will be treated in confidence.

Interview no. _____

1- How much Irish did you do in school?

All Irish	Partly Irish	Some subjects through Irish	Irish as a school subject only	No Irish at all
-----------	--------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------

Primary

Post-Primary

2- Would you rather have studied:

Less Irish (Please go to question no. 3)	More Irish (Please go to question no. 4)	What we did in school was satisfactory (Please go to question no. 5)
---	---	--

3- Why less? Could you express your opinion with regard to the following statements:

a- Learning Irish in school took time from other subjects

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

b- It would have been more useful to study other subjects instead of Irish

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

c- Learning two languages simultaneously can hinder progress at school

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

d- Children seldom learn enough Irish to be able to use it after school

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

e- You do not need to know Irish to find a good job

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

f- The Irish language is not suitable for modern society

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

g- Irish is less useful than any other European language

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

h- I do not need to study and know Irish to understand and perpetuate Irish culture and traditions

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

i- I resented having to study Irish/in Irish

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

4- Why more? Could you please express your opinion with regard to the following statements:

a- The knowledge of Irish becomes useful when studying other languages

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

b- Studying Irish helped me/will help me go on with my studies

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

c- All children should be required to learn Irish as a subject in school

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

d- People who know Irish well have a better chance of getting good jobs and promotions in the

Gaeltacht/outside the Gaeltacht

In the Gaeltacht

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

Outside the Gaeltacht

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

e- To be able to understand better Ireland's culture and traditions one must study and learn Irish

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

5- While in school the way I felt about Irish was

Strongly in favour	In favour	Indifferent	Not in favour	Strongly not in favour
-----------------------	-----------	-------------	---------------	---------------------------

6- Could you express your opinion with regard to the following statements:

a- The maintenance of Irish is the most important of all matters for my community

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

b- The Irish language is dying

Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	-------------	----------	-------------------

c- *If the Irish language dies out, the Gaeltacht will die out too*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

d- *Without Irish Ireland would certainly lose its identity*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

e- *No real Irish person can be against the survival of Irish*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

g- *Most people are not concerned about the future of the Irish language*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

h- *Most young people see all things associated with Irish as too out-dated*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

7- Could you express your opinion with regard to the following statements on governmental support of Irish in the Gaeltacht and the effectiveness of governmental policies in the Gaeltacht:

a- *The Irish language will survive even without governmental support and subsidies*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

b- *The promotion of Irish has been successful.*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

c- *The Government should give more say to Gaeltacht people in developing the Gaeltacht.*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

d- *The money that is spent reviving Irish could be invested in sectors that need it more urgently*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

e- *It is right to finance the promotion of the Irish language.*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

f- *What the Government does about the Irish language is enough to maintain it.*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

g- *The political representatives of our community should be fluent Irish speakers.*
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

h- *Irish speakers have a right to expect that Civil Servants will be able to speak Irish to them.*

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

i- *The Government should spend more money on improving the teaching of Irish in schools.*

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

j- *The Government should improve employment for Irish-speakers in the Gaeltacht*

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

k- *The Irish language policies should concentrate mostly on the the Gaeltacht and not elsewhere*

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

l- *The use of Irish in the Gaeltacht will not increase unless there is a substantial increase in the use of Irish in the rest of Ireland*

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

m- *What the Government does to revive the Irish language is not important to me*

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

n- *In your opinion, is governmental support for the Irish language in Irish-speaking districts of the Republic better than that offered to the Irish language in Irish-speaking districts of Northern Ireland?*

Yes

No

8- What language do you use with the following people

Only Irish Mostly Irish Irish and English equally Mostly English Only English

a- Shopkeepers

b- Veterinarians

c- Doctors

d- Local Gardaí

e- Public Health nurses

f- Local priest

g- Visiting students learning Irish

h- Tourists

i- Social welfare officers

j- Bus conductor

k- Teachers

l- Civil Servants

	Always	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
a- In church					
b- At work					
c- In public meetings					
d- In the local Garda station					
e- At the doctors'					
f- In public offices					
g- At the petrol station					
h- At the Post Office					
i- When visiting friends					
j- In pubs					

Yes No

No Yes

No Yes

RADIO TELEVISION

RADIO TELEVISION

15- Do you read magazines in Irish?

No Yes

16- Do you read books in Irish?

No Yes

(If the answer to questions no. 15 AND 16 is NO, please go to question no. 18)

17- Why do you read magazines and/or books in Irish? Is it because:

MAGAZINES BOOKS

- a- I feel more comfortable reading in Irish
- b- I identify better with information/events related in Irish
- c- Publications in Irish deal with those things that most interest me
- d- I like the quality of publications in Irish
- e- I understand better what is written in Irish

18- Why don't you read magazines and/or books in Irish? Is it because:

MAGAZINES BOOKS

- a- I feel uncomfortable reading in Irish
- b- I don't identify with news/events related in Irish
- c- It is not easy for me to understand them
- d- Publications in English cater better for my interests
- e- I don't like the quality of publications in Irish

19- The media have an important influence in the maintenance of Irish.

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

20- Television and radio programs in English influence young people's attitudes towards Irish in the Gaeltacht/my community.

Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

21- In which language did/do you speak to your mother?

Only English Mostly English English and Irish equally Mostly Irish Only Irish

22- In which language did/do you speak to your father?

Only English Mostly English English and Irish equally Mostly Irish Only Irish

23- How often was Irish used in your home between:

- | | Always | Often | Occasionally | Seldom | Never |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|--------|-------|
| a- Mother and father | | | | | |
| b- Mother and children | | | | | |
| c- Father and children | | | | | |
| d- Children with each other | | | | | |
| e- Parents with relatives | | | | | |
| f- Parents with friends | | | | | |
| g- Grandparents with grandchildren | | | | | |
| h- Grandparents with parents | | | | | |

24- How often is Irish used in your home between:

- | | Always | Often | Occasionally | Seldom | Never |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|--------|-------|
| a- Self and spouse | | | | | |
| b- Mother and children | | | | | |
| c- Father and children | | | | | |
| d- Children with each other | | | | | |
| e- Grandparents with grandchildren | | | | | |
| f- Children with friends | | | | | |

25- How often do you use Irish:

- | | Always | Often | Occasionally | Seldom | Never |
|---|--------|-------|--------------|--------|-------|
| a- outside the Gaeltacht | | | | | |
| b- in the Gaeltacht | | | | | |
| c- in public occasions | | | | | |
| d- at mealtimes | | | | | |
| e- when angry or excited | | | | | |
| f- to avoid others understanding what is being said | | | | | |
| g- in private occasions | | | | | |
| h- helping children with homework | | | | | |

26- Could you express your opinion with regard to the following statements:

- | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| <i>a- Children should be brought up through Irish</i> | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Indifferent | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| <i>b- My children have learnt as much Irish language as they need to know from the family</i> | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Indifferent | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

c- Children must be left free to decide for themselves which language to speak
 Strongly Agree Agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

27- AGE:

18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 + 65

28- SEX

M

F

29- EDUCATION:

Primary school

Post-primary school

Leaving Certificate

Vocational school/Technical College

College of further education

University

30- Where were you born?

.....

31- Did you grow up in the Donegal Gaeltacht?

Yes

No

(Please go to question no. 33)

(Please go to next question)

32- Where did you grow up?

.....

33- Structure of your family of origin:

a- Number of members:

b- Number of brothers and sisters:

c- Father's occupation:

d- Mother's occupation:

34- What is your occupation?

.....

35- Marital status:

Single

Married

Widowed

Separated

Divorced

Other

36- Have you got children?

No

Yes

(Please go to question no. 38)

37- How many children have you got?

none 1 2 3 4 5 5+

38- Do you have other relatives?

No

(Thank you for compiling
the questionnaire)

Yes

(Please go to the next question)

39- Did any of your relatives emigrate?

No

Yes

40- Do you keep in contact with them?

No

(Thank you for compiling
the questionnaire)

Yes

(Please go to the next question)

41- Do you prefer to write or phone?

To write

To phone

Both

42- What language do you use to write to them?

Only English

Mostly English

English and Irish equally

Mostly Irish

Only Irish

43- What language do you use to speak to them?

Only English

Mostly English

English and Irish equally

Mostly Irish

Only Irish

44- Does the choice of the form of communication influence the choice of language?

Yes

No

(Please go to question no. 45)

45- Is it because:

It is easier for me to read English

I feel uncomfortable writing in Irish

My relatives have forgotten their Irish

Other

Appendix C. Questionnaire in Irish

Ba mhaith liom buíochas a thabhairt duit ar shon do chuid foighde agus comhoibriú. Féadfaidh tú a bheith cinnte go gcoinneofar faoi rún iomlán eolais a chruinneofar ón cheistneoir.

Agallamh uimh. _____

1- An ndearna tú mórán Gaeilge ar scoil?

Gaeilge uilig	Measarthacht Gaeilge	Cuid de na trí Ghaeilge	hábhair scoile amháin	Mar ábhar ar bith
---------------	----------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Bunscoil

Meánscoil

2- Arbh fhearr leat dá mbeadh staidéar déanta agat ar:

Níos lú Gaeilge (Gabh go dtí ceist uimh.3)	Níos mó Gaeilge (Gabh go dtí ceist uimh. 4, le do thoil)	Bhí an méid a rinne muid ar scoil (Gabh sásúil go leor go dtí ceist uimh. 5)
---	---	---

3- Cén fáth níos lú? Tabhair do thuairim faoi na ráitis seo a leanas:

a- Chuir foghlaim na Gaeilge ar scoil am amú a d'fhéadfadh a bheith caite ar ábhair eile

Aontaím go láidir	Aontaím	Gan tuairim	Ní aontaím	Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith
-------------------	---------	-------------	------------	----------------------------

b- Bheadh tairbhe níos mó le staidéar a dhéanamh ar ábhair eile in ionad na Gaeilge

Aontaím go láidir	Aontaím	Gan tuairim	Ní aontaím	Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith
-------------------	---------	-------------	------------	----------------------------

c- Cuirtear bac le dul chun cinn ar scoil má fhoghlaimítear dhá theanga i gcuideachta a chéile

Aontaím go láidir	Aontaím	Gan tuairim	Ní aontaím	Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith
-------------------	---------	-------------	------------	----------------------------

d- Is annamh a fhoghlaimíonn páistí go leor Gaeilge le hí a úsáid nuair a fhágfas siad an scoil

Aontaím go láidir	Aontaím	Gan tuairim	Ní aontaím	Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith
-------------------	---------	-------------	------------	----------------------------

e- Ní gá duit Gaeilge a bheith agat le post maith a fháil

Aontaím go láidir	Aontaím	Gan tuairim	Ní aontaím	Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith
-------------------	---------	-------------	------------	----------------------------

f- Níl an Ghaeilge fóirsteanach do shaol an lae inniu

Aontaím go láidir	Aontaím	Gan tuairim	Ní aontaím	Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith
-------------------	---------	-------------	------------	----------------------------

g- Tá níos lú tairbhe le Gaeilge ná mar atá le haon teanga eile Eorpach

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

h- Níl sé d'fhiacha orm staidéar a dhéanamh ar an Ghaeilge agus eolas a bheith agam uirthi le bheith ábalta na traidisiúin agus an cultúr Gaelach a thuigbheáil agus a chur chun cinn

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

i- Ghoill sé orm gurbh éigean domh staidéar a dhéanamh ar Ghaeilge/i nGaeilge

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

4- Cén fáth níos mó? Ar mhiste leat do thuairim a chur in íúl faoi na ráitis seo a leanas:

a- Bíonn eolas ar an Ghaeilge úsáideach nuair atáthar ag déanamh staidéir ar theangacha eile

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

b- Chuaigh/rachaidh staidéar na Gaeilge chun sochair domh le mo chuid staidéir eile

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

c- Ba chóir go mbeadh sé riachtanach do gach páiste an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim mar ábhar scoile

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

d- Beidh deis níos fearr ag daoine atá líofa sa Ghaeilge postanna maithe agus ardú céime a fháil sa Ghaeltacht/taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht

Sa Ghaeltacht

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

Taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

e- Chun bheith in inmhe cultúr agus traidisiúin na hÉireann a thuigbheáil níos fearr caithfidh duine staidéar a dhéanamh ar an Ghaeilge agus í a fhoghlaim

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

5- Is é mar seo a leanas a mhothaigh mé fá dtaobh den Ghaeilge le linn domh a bheith ar scoil:

Go mór ina leith	Ina leith	Gan tuairim	Ní raibh mé ina leith	Bhí mé go mór ina héadan
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6- An bhféadfá do bharúil a thabhairt maidir leis na ráitis seo a leanas:

a- *Is é cothú na Gaeilge an rud is tábhachtaí do mo phobal*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

b- *Tá an Ghaeilge ag fáil bháis*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

c- *Má fhaigheann an Ghaeilge bás, beidh deireadh leis an Ghaeltacht fosta*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

d- *Gan an teanga Ghaeilge, chaillfeadh Éirinn a féiniúlacht gan dabht*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

e- *Ní fhéadfadh Éireannach fíor ar bith a bheith in éadan maireachtáil na Gaeilge*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

g- *Ní miste le furmhór na ndaoine cad é atá i ndán don Ghaeilge*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

h- *Tá furmhór na ndaoine óga den bharúil go bhfuil gach rud a bhaineann leis an Ghaeilge ró-sheanaimseartha*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

7- An dtabharfá do thuairim faoi na ráitis seo a leanas i dtaca le tacaíocht Rialtais don Ghaeilge sa Ghaeltacht chomh maith le héifeacht na bpolasaithe Rialtais ar an Ghaeltacht:

a- *Mairfidh an Ghaeilge cé acu an mbeidh tacaíocht agus fóirdheontais Rialtais aici nó nach mbeidh*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

b- *D'éirigh go maith le dul chun cinn na Gaeilge*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

c- *Ba chóir don Rialtas cead a thabhairt do mhuintir na Gaeltachta a bheith níos rannpháirtigh i bhforbairt na Gaeltachta.*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

d- *Ba chóir an t-airgead atáthar a chaitheamh ar athbheochana na Gaeilge a infheistiú sna hearnálacha ina bhfuil gá níos práinní leis*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

e- *Is cóir cothú na Gaeilge a mhaoiniú*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

f- *Tá an Rialtas ag déanamh go leor ar mhaithe le cothú na Gaeilge.*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

g- *Ba chóir d'ionadaithe pholaitiúla ár bpobal a bheith ina gcainteoirí líofa Gaeilge*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

h- *Tá cainteoirí Gaeilge i dteideal a bheith ag súil go mbeadh Státseirbhisígh ábalta Gaeilge a labhairt leo*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

i- *Ba chóir don Rialtas níos mó airgid a chaitheamh le feabhas a chur ar mhúineadh na Gaeilge sna scoileanna*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

j- *Ba chóir don Rialtas deiseanna fostaíochta níos fearr a chur ar fáil sa Ghaeltacht do chainteoirí dúchais*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

k- *Ba chóir go mbeadh na polasaithe i leith na Gaeilge dírithe níos mó ar an Ghaeltacht ná ar cheantair eile taobh amuigh*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

l- *Ní thiocfaidh méadú ar úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht mura mbeidh méadú suntasach in úsáid na Gaeilge sa chuid eile d'Éirinn*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

m- *Ní miste liomsa cad é a dhéanfas an Rialtas i dtaca le hathbheochana na Gaeilge*

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

n- *I do thuairimse, an bhfuil tacaíocht Rialtais don Ghaeilge i gceantair ina labhartar an Ghaeilge i bPoblacht na hÉireann níos fearr ná an tacaíocht atá ar fáil do cheantair ina labhartar Gaeilge sna Sé Contae?*

Tá

Níl

8- *Cén teanga a mbaineann tú úsáid aisti leis na daoine seo a leanas:*

	Gaeilge amháin	Gaeilge den chuid is mó	An oiread céanna Gaeilge agus Béarla	Béarla den chuid is mó	Béarla amháin
a- Lucht siopaí					
b- Tréadlianna					
c- Dochtúirí					
d- Gardaí áitúla					
e- Banaltraí Sláinte					
Poiblí					
f- Sagart áitiúil					
g- Scoláirí atá ar cuairt fhoghlamtha					
Gaeilge					
h- Turasóirí					
i- Oifigí leasa shóisialaigh					
j- Stiúrthóir bus					
k- Múinteoirí					
l- Státseirbhisigh					

9- *Cad é chomh minic is a bhaineann tú úsáid as an Ghaeilge:*

	I gcónaí	Go minic	Corr uair	Go hannamh	Ní bhainim úsáid aisti riamh
a- San eaglais					
b- San obair					
c- Ag cruinnithe poiblí					
d- Ag beairic na nGardaí					
e- I dteach an dochtúra					
f- In oifigí poiblí					
g- Ag stáisiún an pheitрил					
h- In Oifig an Phoist					
i- Ag cuartaíocht le cairde					
j- I dtithe tábhairne					

10- Dá mba mhian le duine i do phobalsa Gaeilge a úsáid i gcónaí, an mbeadh a leithéid sin indéanta?

Bheadh

Ní bheadh

11- An éisteann tú le cláracha Gaeilge ar an raidió ?

Éistim

Ní éistim

12- An gcoimheadann tú cláracha Gaeilge ar an teilifís?

Ní choimheadaim

Coimheadaim

(Má tá freagraí DIÚLTACHA tugtha agat ar cheisteanna 11 AGUS 12, gabh ar aghaidh go dtí ceist uimh. 14)

13- Cad chuige a n-éisteann/a gcoimheadann tú cláracha atá craolta i nGaeilge ? An é siocair:

RAIDIÓ

TEILIFÍS

a- Thig liom dáimh níos fearr a bheith agam le cláracha atá i nGaeilge

b- Tá sé níos fusa agam na cláracha Gaeilge a thuighbheáil

c- Freastalaíonn na cláracha Gaeilge níos fearr ar mo chuid spéiseanna

d- Tá dúil agam i gcáilíocht na gcláracha Gaeilge

e- Bainim sult as na cláracha Gaeilge

g- Tugann na cláracha Gaeilge eolas níos beaichte

14- Cén fáth nach n-éisteann tú agus/nó nach gcoimheadann tú cláracha Gaeilge? An é siocair:

RAIDIÓ

TEILIFÍS

a- Ní maith liom an cháilíocht atá sna cláracha Gaeilge

b- Ní mhothaím dáimh ar bith le cláracha atá i nGaeilge

c- Tá an t-eolas a thugtar faoi chláracha Béarla níos beaichte

d- Ní bhainaim sult ar bith as cláracha atá i nGaeilge

e- Ní fhreastalaíonn cláracha atá i nGaeilge ar mo chuid spéiseanna

15- An léann tú irisí Gaeilge?

Ní léim

Léim

16- An léann tú leabhair Ghaeilge

Ní léim

Léim

(Má thug tú freagra DIÚLTACH ar cheistanna 15 AGUS 16, gabh ar aghaidh go dtí ceist uimh. 18)

17- Cad chuige a léann tú irisí agus/nó leabhair atá scríofa i nGaeilge? An é siocair:

IRISÍ LEABHAIR

- a- Mothaím níos sócúlaí nuair a léim i nGaeilge
- b- Tá dáimh níos mó agam le heolas/imeachtaí a dtugtar faisnéis fúthu i nGaeilge
- c- Freastalaíonn cláracha Gaeilge níos fearr ar na spéiseanna atá agam
- d- Taitníonn cáilíocht na bhfoilseacháin Ghaeilge liom
- e- Tá tuigbheáil níos fearr agam ar an rud atá scríofa i nGaeilge

18- Cad chuige nach léann tú irisí agus/nó leabhar atá scríofa i nGaeilge? An é siocair:

IRISÍ LEABHAIR

- a- Ní mhothaím ar mo shóchúl nuair a léim i nGaeilge
- b- Níl aon bhá agam le nuacht//le himeachtaí a dtugtar faisnéis fúthu i nGaeilge
- c- Níl sé furasta agam iad a thuigbheáil
- d- Freastalaíonn cláracha Béarla níos fearr ar na spéiseanna atá agam
- e- Ní maith liom an cháilíocht atá sna cláracha Gaeilge

19- Tá tionchar thábhachtach ag na meáin ar chothabháil na Gaeilge.

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

20- Tá tionchar mhór ag cláracha teilifíse agus raidió Béarla ar dhearcadh na ndaoine óga i leith na Gaeilge i mo phobalsa/sa Ghaeltacht.

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

21- Cén teanga inar labhair/ina labhrann tú le do mháthair?

Béarla amháin	Béarla den chuid is mó	An oiread céanna Béarla agus Gaeilge	Gaeilge den chuid is mó	Gaeilge amháin
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22- Cén teanga inar labhair/ina labhrann tú le d'athair?

Béarla amháin	Béarla den chuid is mó	An oiread céanna Béarla agus Gaeilge	Gaeilge den chuid is mó	Gaeilge amháin
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23- Cé chomh minic is a baineadh úsáid as Gaeilge i do theaghlach idir:

	I gcónaí	Go minic	Corr uair	Go hannamh	Níor úsáideadh í riamh
a- Athair agus máthair					
b- Máthair agus páistí					
c- Athair agus páistí					
d- Páistí eatarthu féin					
e- Tuismitheoirí le gaolta					
f- Tuismitheoirí le cairde					
g- Aithreacha/Máithreacha móra le garpháistí					
h- Aithreacha/Máithreacha móra le tuismitheoirí					

24- Cé chomh minic is a bhaintear úsáid as Gaeilge i do theaghlach i láthair na huaire idir :

	I gcónaí	Go minic	Corr uair	Go hannamh	Ní úsáidtear í riamh
a- Tú féin agus do chéile					
b- Máthair agus páistí					
c- Athair agus páistí					
d- Páistí le chéile					
e- Aithreacha/mháithreacha móra agus garpháistí					
f- Páistí agus cairde					

25- Cé chomh minic is a bhaineann tú úsáid as an Ghaeilge:

	I gcónaí	Go minic	Corr uair	Go hannamh	Ní úsáidim í riamh
a- taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht					
b- taobh istigh den Ghaeltacht					
c- ar ócáidí poiblí					
d- ag béilí					
e- nuair atá tú feargach nó tógtha					
f- sa dóigh nach dtuigfidh daoine eile cad é atáthar a rá					
g- ar ócáidí príobháideacha					
h- nuair ata tú ag cuidiú leis na páistí obair bhaile a dhéanamh					

26- An bhféadfá do thuairim a thabhairt faoi na ráitis seo a leanas:

a- Ba chóir páistí a thógáil le Gaeilge

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

b- Tá an oiread Gaeilge is a dhéanfas cúis daofa foghlamtha ag mo chuid páistí ón teaghlach

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

c- Caithfear ligint do pháistí a n-intinn féin a dhéanamh suas fá cén teanga a labhras siad

Aontaím go láidir Aontaím Gan tuairim Ní aontaím Ní aontaím ar chor ar bith

27- AOIS:

18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 + 65

28- GNÉAS F B

29- OIDEACHAS:

Bunscoil

Meánscoil

Ardteistiméireacht

Gairmscoil/Coláiste Teicneolaíochta

Coláiste Iaroideachais

Ollscoil

30- Cá háit a dtáinig tú ar an tsaol?

.....

31- Ar tógadh tú i nGaelocht Thír Chonaill?

Tógadh

Níor tógadh

(Gabh go dtí ceist uimh. 33)

(Gabh go dtí an chéad cheist eile, le do thoil)

32- Cá háit ar tógadh tú?

.....

33- *Structúr an teaghlaigh dar díobh thú:*

a- Líon daoine sa teaghlach:

b- Líon deartháireacha agus deirfiúracha:

c- Slí bheatha an athar:

d- Slí bheatha na máthar:

34- Cén slí bheatha atá agat?

.....

35- *Stádas pósta:*

Díomhaoin

Pósta

Baintreach

Scartha
Colscartha

36- Bhfuil páistí agat?

Níl Tá
(Gabh go dtí ceist uimh. 38)

37- *Cá mhéad páiste atá agat?*

ceann ar bith 1 2 3 4 5 5+

38- An bhfuil gaolta eile agat?

Níl Tá
(Go raibh maith ar shon (Gabh ar aghaidh go dtí an chéad cheist eile, le do thoil)
)
an cheistneora a líonadh isteach)

39- An ndeachaigh aon ghaolta leat ar imirce?

Ní dheachaigh Chuaigh

40- An gcoinníonn tú i dteagmháil leo?

Ní choinním Coinním
(Go raibh maith agat ar shon an (Gabh ar aghaidh go dtí an chéad cheist eile, le
do thoil) cheistneora a líonadh isteach)

41- An fearr leat litir a scríobh nó glaoch gutháin a chur chucu?

Litir a scríobh
Glaoch gutháin a dhéanamh
An dá chuid

42- *Cén teanga ina scríobhann tú chucu?*

Béarla amháin Béarla den chuid An oiread céanna Gaeilge den Gaeilge amháin
is mó Béarla agus Gaeilge chuid is mó

43- *Cén teanga ina labhrann tú leo?*

Béarla amháin Béarla den chuid An oiread céanna Gaeilge den Gaeilge amháin
is mó Béarla agus Gaeilge chuid is mó

44- An mbíonn tionchar ag modh na cumarsáide ar an teanga a roghnaítear?

Bíonn Ní bhíonn
(Gabh go dtí ceist uimh. 45, le do thoil)

45- *An é sin cionnas:*

Tá sé níos fusa agam Béarla a léamh

Mothaím míshócúlach nuair a scríobhaim i nGaeilge

Tá dearmad déanta ag mo chuid gaolta ar a gcuid Gaeilge

Eile

Appendix D. Electoral divisions by category

ELECTORAL DIVISIONS: Category A	Tot. Pop. 3+	DS	SFR (DS)	%DS	County
149. Camas	375	341	2.293	90.933	Co. Galway
154. Garmna	1245	1148	2.283	92.209	Co. Galway
152. An Cromptán	2192	1934	2.274	88.230	Co. Galway
39. Scainimh	625	576	2.262	92.160	Co. Galway
158. Leitir Móir	791	703	2.238	88.875	Co. Galway
161. An Turlach	460	394	2.204	85.652	Co. Galway
38. Mín an Chladaigh	1250	1070	2.194	85.600	Co. Donegal
54. Cill Chuimín	1249	1054	2.184	84.388	Co. Galway
53. Árainn	1247	1021	2.114	81.877	Co. Galway
61. Sailearna	1241	1028	2.102	82.836	Co. Galway
36. Gort an Choirce	1590	1326	2.094	83.396	Co. Donegal
33. An Cnoc Buí	808	658	2.044	81.436	Co. Galway
37. Machaire Chlochair	2555	2024	2.035	79.217	Co. Donegal
55. Cill Aithnín	806	632	2.021	78.412	Co. Galway
39. Cill Chuáin	438	349	1.989	79.680	Co. Kerry
38. Cill Maoilchéadair	536	417	1.961	77.799	Co. Kerry
35. Dún Urlann	407	317	1.931	77.887	Co. Kerry
35. Abhainn Ghabhla	334	251	1.910	75.150	Co. Galway
35. Dún Lúiche	665	486	1.840	73.083	Co. Donegal
42. Márthain	238	161	1.759	67.647	Co. Kerry
63. An Spidéal	1196	813	1.758	67.977	Co. Galway
60. Cnoc an Daimh	375	252	1.662	67.200	Co. Mayo
34. Dún Chaoin	207	132	1.585	63.768	Co. Kerry
155. Cill Chuimín (Gleann Trasna)	114	60	1.356	52.632	Co. Galway

ELECTORAL DIVISIONS: Category B	Tot. Pop. 3+	DS	SFR (DS)	%DS	County
108. Suí Corr*	14	10	1.799	71.429	Co. Donegal
40. Árainn Mhór	529	332	1.595	62.760	Co. Donegal
160. An Ros	105	64	1.551	60.952	Co. Galway
42. Cró Bheithe	170	103	1.519	60.588	Co. Donegal
51. Gleann Léithín	167	96	1.503	57.485	Co. Donegal
48. Baile na	296	175	1.480	59.122	Co. Donegal

Finne					
53. An Ghrafaidh	192	109	1.476	56.771	Co. Donegal
45. Ceann Trá	448	249	1.437	55.580	Co. Kerry
47. Abhainn Bhraín	242	133	1.422	54.959	Co. Mayo
39. Anagaire	2138	1191	1.412	55.706	Co. Donegal
206. Gort na Tiobhratan	411	218	1.376	53.041	Co. Cork
90. An Ráth Mhór*	372	195	1.313	52.419	Co. Meath
129. Allt na Péiste*	163	80	1.266	49.080	Co. Donegal
290. Cléire*	127	62	1.230	48.819	Co. Cork
199. Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh	477	214	1.133	44.864	Co. Cork
70. Baile Átha Buí*	57	26	1.080	45.614	Co. Meath
34. An Rinn *	1026	442	1.043	43.080	Co. Waterford
20. Baile Mhac Airt	301	98	0.840	32.558	Co. Waterford
82. Cill Bhríde*	210	55	0.688	26.190	Co. Meath
19. Aird Mhór*	61	12	0.539	19.672	Co. Waterford

ELECTORAL DIVISIONS: Category C	Tot. Pop. 3+	DS	SFR (DS)	%DS	County
4. Na Beathacha*	15	7	1.113	46.667	Co. Kerry
151. Conga	493	201	1.070	40.771	Co. Galway
43. An Mhin Aird	373	163	1.065	43.700	Co. Kerry
32. Na Croisbhealaí*	2130	886	1.055	41.596	Co. Donegal
33. Baile an Chalaídh	229	95	1.052	41.485	Co. Mayo
36. Na Gleannta	1419	584	1.041	41.156	Co. Kerry
108. Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh* (T. Co.)	200	84	1.036	42.000	Co. Cork
51. Na Forbacha	1211	476	1.010	39.306	Co. Galway
52. An Geata Mór Theas	894	365	1.005	40.828	Co. Mayo
40. Cinn Aird	357	140	0.998	39.216	Co. Kerry
202. Claonráth*	142	52	0.994	36.620	Co. Cork
131. An Clochán*	488	186	0.980	38.115	Co. Donegal
49. Gleann Cholm Cille	689	261	0.977	37.881	Co. Donegal
29. Cé Bhréanainn	127	46	0.954	36.220	Co. Kerry

218. An Sliabh Riabhach	739	260	0.927	35.183	Co. Cork
56. Cill Ghabhlaigh	374	135	0.911	36.096	Co. Donegal
46. An Dúchoraidh	78	27	0.911	34.615	Co. Donegal
219. Na hUláin	523	186	0.895	35.564	Co. Cork
115. Fánaid Thiar*	218	76	0.869	34.862	Co. Donegal
62. Sliabh an Aonaigh	615	204	0.857	33.171	Co. Galway
126. Ros Goill	782	264	0.857	33.760	Co. Donegal
31. An Uillinn	91	29	0.850	31.868	Co. Galway
31. An Clochán	258	84	0.826	32.558	Co. Kerry
48. Partraí*	38	12	0.790	31.579	Co. Mayo
23. Toghroinn Fhíonáin	134	42	0.789	31.343	Co. Kerry
27. An Baile Dubh	131	43	0.783	32.824	Co. Kerry
5. Baile an Sceilg	346	107	0.771	30.925	Co. Kerry
153. An Chorr	158	48	0.765	30.380	Co. Galway
200. Ceann Droma	246	73	0.760	29.675	Co. Cork
53. Domhnach Phádraig*	528	155	0.751	29.356	Co. Meath
37. An Cheapaigh Dhuibh	328	96	0.741	29.268	Co. Mayo
35. Baile Óbha*	166	47	0.734	28.313	Co. Mayo
19. Loch Luíoch*	16	4	0.696	25.000	Co. Kerry
58. An Leargaidh Mhór*	378	104	0.688	27.513	Co. Donegal
205. Doire Fhínín	211	56	0.679	26.540	Co. Cork
9. Ceannúigh*	143	38	0.674	26.573	Co. Kerry
62. Málainn Bhig	377	99	0.669	26.260	Co. Donegal
33. An Daingean	1593	385	0.668	24.168	Co. Kerry
114. Fánaid Thuaidh*	493	132	0.661	26.775	Co. Donegal
133. An Corrán	730	188	0.647	25.753	Co. Mayo
124. Acaill	934	233	0.628	24.946	Co. Mayo
44. Bearna*	2367	586	0.622	24.757	Co. Galway
55. Cill Charthaigh	627	143	0.592	22.807	Co. Donegal
62. Moing na Bó	304	69	0.561	22.697	Co. Mayo
14. Doire Ianna	206	45	0.558	21.845	Co. Kerry
128. An Tearmann*	183	40	0.556	21.858	Co. Donegal
59. Maigh Cuilinn	1323	289	0.554	21.844	Co. Galway

20. Máistir Gaoithe	83	17	0.536	20.482	Co. Kerry
37. Cloch na Rón*	85	18	0.533	21.176	Co. Galway
65. Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin*	1003	213	0.533	21.236	Co. Galway
113. Creamhghort*	281	57	0.528	20.285	Co. Donegal
43. Cró Caorach	134	26	0.525	19.403	Co. Donegal
136. Dumha Éige	654	135	0.517	20.642	Co. Mayo
122. Loch Caol*	34	7	0.512	20.588	Co. Donegal
150. An Fhairche	890	175	0.503	19.663	Co. Galway
212. Cill na Martra*	327	64	0.495	19.572	Co. Cork
51. An Geata Mór Thuaidh	851	170	0.491	19.976	Co. Mayo
59. Leitir Mhic an Bhaird	650	126	0.489	19.385	Co. Donegal
54. Inis Caoil	112	21	0.478	18.750	Co. Donegal
44. An Sráidbhaile*	32	6	0.474	18.750	Co. Kerry
47. Ceathrú an Bhrúnaigh	723	136	0.470	18.811	Co. Galway
3. Bearna*	5508	943	0.452	17.121	Galway Co. Bor.
6. An Baile Breac*	64	12	0.450	18.750	Co. Kerry
13. Béal Deirg Mór	197	35	0.442	17.766	Co. Mayo
111. Carraig Airt*	382	65	0.430	17.016	Co. Donegal
46. An Carn Mór	1887	316	0.427	16.746	Co. Galway
61. Cnoc na Lobhar	816	142	0.424	17.402	Co. Mayo
50. Gleann Gheis*	154	25	0.420	16.234	Co. Donegal
61. An Machaire	615	97	0.403	15.772	Co. Donegal
47. An Clochán Liath	1785	278	0.398	15.574	Co. Donegal
118. Grianfort*	19	3	0.396	15.789	Co. Donegal
54. Barr Rúscáí	129	20	0.391	15.504	Co. Mayo
2. Baile an Bhriota*	60	9	0.384	15.000	Galway Co. Bor.
22. Binn an Choire*	116	17	0.369	14.655	Co. Galway
15. An tImleach*	319	46	0.369	14.420	Co. Kerry
24. Trian Iarthach*	126	19	0.361	15.079	Co. Kerry
63. Na Monga	249	37	0.360	14.859	Co. Mayo
13. Doire	151	20	0.355	13.245	Co. Kerry

Fhionáin*					
156. Leitir Breacáin*	31	4	0.355	12.903	Co. Galway
57. Gleann Chaisil	476	67	0.350	14.076	Co. Mayo
30. Críoch na Sméar*	38	5	0.349	13.158	Co. Donegal
55. Béal an Mhuirthead	1808	250	0.347	13.827	Co. Mayo
41. Ard an Rátha*	52	7	0.339	13.462	Co. Donegal
48. Baile Chláir	1536	194	0.332	12.630	Co. Galway
63. Maol Mosóg*	137	18	0.331	13.139	Co. Donegal
52. Na Gleannta*	115	15	0.330	13.043	Co. Donegal
64. Cnoc na Ráithe	782	104	0.330	13.299	Co. Mayo
34. Maíros*	128	16	0.325	12.500	Co. Galway
41. Tailtin*	342	40	0.296	11.696	Co. Meath
4. An Caisleán Gearr*	1000	110	0.287	11.000	Galway Co. Bor.
56. Leacach Beag*	138	15	0.283	10.870	Co. Galway
8. Cathair Dónall*	97	10	0.280	10.309	Co. Kerry
40. Eanach Dhúin	1473	159	0.279	10.794	Co. Galway
10. Mionlach	4651	456	0.273	9.804	Galway Co. Bor.
121. Cnoc Colbha*	110	11	0.249	10.000	Co. Donegal
112. An Cheathrú Chaol*	20	2	0.247	10.000	Co. Donegal
82. Tamhnaigh na Graí*	50	5	0.241	10.000	Co. Mayo
64. Inis Mhic an Doirn	1410	132	0.238	9.362	Co. Donegal
34. Dún Fionnachaidh*	58	5	0.227	8.621	Co. Donegal
144. Mín Charraigeach*	11	1	0.222	9.091	Co. Donegal
42. Baile an Teampaill*	186	16	0.219	8.602	Co. Galway
59. Guala Mhór*	119	10	0.206	8.403	Co. Mayo
31. An Craoslach*	64	5	0.199	7.813	Co. Donegal
56. Gleann na Muaidhe	241	17	0.178	7.054	Co. Mayo
98. Mín an Lábáin*	51	2	0.102	3.922	Co. Donegal
58. Lisín an Bhealaigh*	39	1	0.071	2.564	Co. Galway
33. Caisleán na dTuath*	34	1	0.069	2.941	Co. Donegal

101. Gartán*	0	0	0.000	0.000	Co. Donegal
23. Loch lascaigh*	5	0	0.000	0.000	Co. Donegal
12. An Bhinn Bhán*	6	0	0.000	0.000	Co. Donegal
8. Cnoc na Cathrach*	18	0	0.000	0.000	Galway Co. Bor.

Appendix E. Interview protocol

Irish in education:

- Did you study through Irish at primary and secondary level?
- What was the language spoken in the schoolyard?
- What was your experience with Irish in education?
- Can you think of any advantages or disadvantages of an education through the medium of Irish?

Attitudes towards the future of the language:

- Is Irish a healthy/strong language?
- How do you see the language in 20 to 50 years?

Attitudes towards governmental support to Irish-speaking communities:

- What is your opinion with regard to governmental support for the Irish language in the Gaeltacht?
- In your opinion is governmental support offered here in the Republic for the Irish language better than that offered in Northern Ireland to Irish speakers?

Use of Irish in the community and the family domain:

- If you wanted to use Irish in your community would you be able to do so with all the people and in all contexts and situations?
- If you met somebody from another Gaeltacht area, would you be able to communicate without problems?
- Is Irish the language spoken in your home?
- Is Irish the language you use to communicate with your (emigrated) relatives?

Irish in the media:

- Do you watch/listen to Irish language programmes?
- Do you read in Irish?

Appendix F. Excel spreadsheet

[illegible]

Appendix G. Glossary

Áras Mháirtín Uí Chadhain: The Irish Language Acquisition and Maintenance Centre is one of the Gaeltacht centres of *Oifig na Gaeilge Labhartha* (the Department of Spoken Irish) of the National University of Ireland, Galway. It organizes courses for both university students and overseas learners.

Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge: The Irish Language Books Board

Breac-Ghaeltachtaí: the partly Irish-speaking districts

Bunscoil Phobal Feirste: Irish-medium primary school based in *Pobal Feirste*

An Caighdeán Oifigiúil: The Official Standard

Coimisiún Na Gaeltachta: Gaeltacht Commission

Comhar na Múinteoirí Gaeilge: Council of Teachers of Irish

Cultúrlann MacAdam Ó Fiaich: Cultural centre based in Falls Road, Belfast.

Cumann Gaelach Chnos na Ros Doire: The Irish Society Rosemount Derry . A group that promotes awareness of cultural diversity through arts, education, and heritage.

Deontas/: Student grant scheme in support of those Gaeltacht families who use Irish as their main means of communication.

An Foclóir Póca: English-Irish/Irish-English dictionary

An Gaeláras: A community resource centre dedicated to the promotion of the Irish language

Fíor-Ghaeltachtaí: The mostly Irish-speaking districts

Foras na Gaeilge: Body responsible for the promotion of the Irish language throughout the whole island of Ireland.

Gaeltacht(aí): Irish-speaking area

Gaelscoileanna: Irish Medium Education

Gaeltarra Éireanna: Industrial development agency for the Gaeltacht

Galltacht: English-speaking area

Garda(í): Police officer(s)

Gramadach na Gaeilge agus Litriú na Gaeilge: The Grammar and Spelling of Irish

Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann: The Linguistics Institute of Ireland

Lárchanúint: Central dialect

Na Naíonraí Gaelacha: An independent voluntary organisation for Irish-medium nursery schools

Pobal Feirste: Shaw's Road Irish-speaking community based in Belfast

Raidió na Gaeltachta: Irish language radio

Roinn na Gaeltachta: Department for the Gaeltacht

An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta: The Department of Arts, Heritage and
the Gaeltacht

An Roinn Oideachais: The Department of Education

Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge: Irish Speaking Scheme

Údarás na Gaeltachta: Gaeltacht Authority

Appendix H. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

DON:	Donegal Gaeltacht
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
DED:	District of Electoral Division
DOMPEOPLE	12-item scale on Irish language use with various people
DOMPLACE	10-item scale on Irish language use in various places/contexts
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
GENUSE	8-item scale on Irish language use in the Gaeltacht
GIDS	Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
GOVLOP	12-item scale on attitudes towards language policies
IRSITOP	7-item scale on attitudes towards the future of the language, its maintenance and its role as a symbol of ethnic identity
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
LESSDOP	9-item scale on attitudes associated with the desire to have studied less Irish in school
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
MOREDOP	6-item scale on attitudes associated with the desire to have studied more Irish in school
NOWHOME	6-item scale on Irish language use in the current family
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PF:	<i>Pobal Feirste</i> (Shaw's Road) Irish-speaking community in Belfast
RLS	Reversing Language Shift
SC:	South Connemara Gaeltacht
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SUMLESS1	Index on Irish seen as an obstacle to proficiency in other subjects
SUMLESS2	Index on the usefulness of Irish in finding a job
SUMMORE1	Index of the usefulness of Irish both at school and when looking for a job
TPA	Theory of Reasoned Action
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
USEDHOME	8-item scale on Irish language use in the family of origin

Appendix I. PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEES AT THE TIME OF THE INTERVIEW

Informants who took part in the interviews carried out at the University of Galway:

G1 was born in Kerry and grew up in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht. He belongs to the 18-25 age group and is a University student. He has two siblings. His father is the director of a museum and his mother a housewife. He is single. All his education was through the medium of Irish. The language spoken in his home has always been Irish. This interview was discarded because the quality of the audio recording was bad and most of the interview was not audible.

G2 was born in Galway and grew up in the Donegal Gaeltacht. Her parents were not native speakers of Irish but moved to the Gaeltacht in order to raise their children as native speakers of the language. She belongs to the 26-35 age group and she is a University student. She has three sisters and her father is retired. Her primary and secondary level education was through them medium of Irish. The language spoken in her home is Irish. She is single and works as a dubber and subtitler translating into Irish.

G3 was born in Galway and grew up in Turloch, Ros Muc, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 26-35 age group and she is a University student. She has three brothers and two sisters, her father is a bus driver and her mother a housewife. All her schooling has been through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language spoken in her home, although her mother is not a native speaker of Irish. She is single and has worked for the Cultúrlann in Belfast.

G4 was born in Galway and grew up in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has one sibling, her father is a craft worker and her mother a social worker. Her education was through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language she speaks with her family. She is single.

G5 was born in England and grew up in Carraroe in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has one sister, her father is a crane drives and her mother is a housewife. Her education was through the medium of Irish, which is also the language spoken in her home. She is single. This

interview was discarded because, due to technical problems, more than half of the interview was not recorded.

G6 was born in Galway and grew up in Carraroe in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has one brother and one sister, her father is an engineer and her mother a substitute teacher. Both her primary and secondary school education was through the medium of Irish. In her home they speak mostly Irish. She is single.

G7 was born in Corr Na Móna, in the North Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has three sisters, her father is a farmer and her mother a housewife. Her primary school education was through the medium of Irish, in her secondary school education she only studied a few subjects through Irish. In her home English is the dominant language. She is single.

G8 was born in Rossaveal, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht and grew up in the same place. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has four siblings, her father is deceased and her mother is a housewife. Both her primary and secondary school education was through the medium of Irish. In her home they speak both Irish and English. She is single.

G9 was born in Indreabhán, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht and grew up in the same place. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has two brothers, her father is a system analyst and her mother an office worker. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. In her home they speak both Irish and English. She is single.

G10 was born in Galway and grew up in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has two brothers and two sisters, her father is a small farmer and her mother a factory worker. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Her parents always speak Irish, she and her siblings speak English. She is single.

G11 was born in Galway and grew up in Lettermore, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. He belongs to the 18-25 age group and he is a University student and a part-

time bar manager. He has three siblings, his father is a builder and his mother a secretary. His primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language used in his home. He is single.

G12 was born in Chicago and grew up in Carraroe, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a University student. She has two brothers, her father is a carpenter and her mother a nurse. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language used in her home. She is single.

Informants who took part in the interviews carried out at Coláiste Uí Chadhain, in Carraroe:

C1 was born in Dublin and grew up in the same place. He belongs to the 18-25 age group and he is a college student. He has three brothers, his father is a civil servant, his mother is deceased. Both his primary and secondary level education were through the medium of English. The language used in his home is Irish. He is single.

C2 was born in Galway and grew up in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a college student. She has three brothers and seven sisters, her father is a farmer and her mother a housewife. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language used in her home. She is single.

C3 was born in Galway and grew up in Spiddal, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. He belongs to the 26-35 age group and he is a college student. He has one brother and one sister, his father is retired and his mother is a teacher. His primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language used in his home. He is single.

C4 was born in Galway and grew up in Trá Bhain, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a college student. She has one sister and three brothers, her father is a fish farmer and her mother a factory worker. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language used in her home. She is single.

C5 was born in Spiddal, in the South Connemara Gaeltacht, and grew up in the same place. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a college student. She has three brothers, her father is a carpenter and her mother an office worker. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the dominant language in her home. She lives with her boyfriend.

C6 was born in Galway and grew up in the South Connemara Gaeltacht. She belongs to the 26-35 age group and she is a college student. She has five sisters and four brothers, her father is deceased and her mother is a housewife. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. The language used in her home is English. She is single.

C7 was born in Galway and grew up in the same place. She belongs to the 18-25 age group and she is a college student. She has two brothers and four sisters, her father is a farmer and her mother a housewife. Her primary and secondary school was all through the medium of Irish. Irish is the language used in her home. She is single.

Informants who took part in the interviews carried out in Derry:

D1 was born in Derry and when she moved to Gweedore, in the Donegal Gaeltacht when she was an adult. She belongs to the 36-45 age group and is the Development Officer at *An Gaeláras* (a community resource centre dedicated to the promotion of the Irish language). She is an only child, both her parents worked as factory workers in Scotland. She is married and has a son. All her primary and second level education was through the medium of Irish. Irish was the language spoken in her family of origin and is the language she speaks with her own family and friends.

D2 was born in the Donegal Gaeltacht and then moved to Dublin when she was 12. She belongs to 26-35 age group and is a college student at Magee College, University of Ulster. She has 3 siblings, her father is retired and her mother a housewife. Her primary and secondary level education were through the medium of English. The language spoken at home was and is Irish. She is married.

D3 was born in the Donegal Gaeltacht, then moved to Scotland when she was a toddler and moved back to the Donegal Gaeltacht when she was 17. She belongs to the 45-56

age group and is a college student at Magee College, University of Ulster. She has 6 siblings, both her parents were factory workers. Her primary and secondary level education were through the medium of English. The language spoken at home was and is Irish. She is married and has 4 children. This interview had to be discarded because the file got corrupted and it was not possible to retrieve any data.

D4 – this interview served as the pilot for all the other interviews. Two people, two officers at *Cumann Gaelach Chnos na Ros Doire* (the Irish Society Rosemount Derry), were interviewed at the same time in order to pilot the semi-structured questionnaire that was used as a basis for all the other interviews. These two women also helped me contact the other three informants I interviewed in Derry.